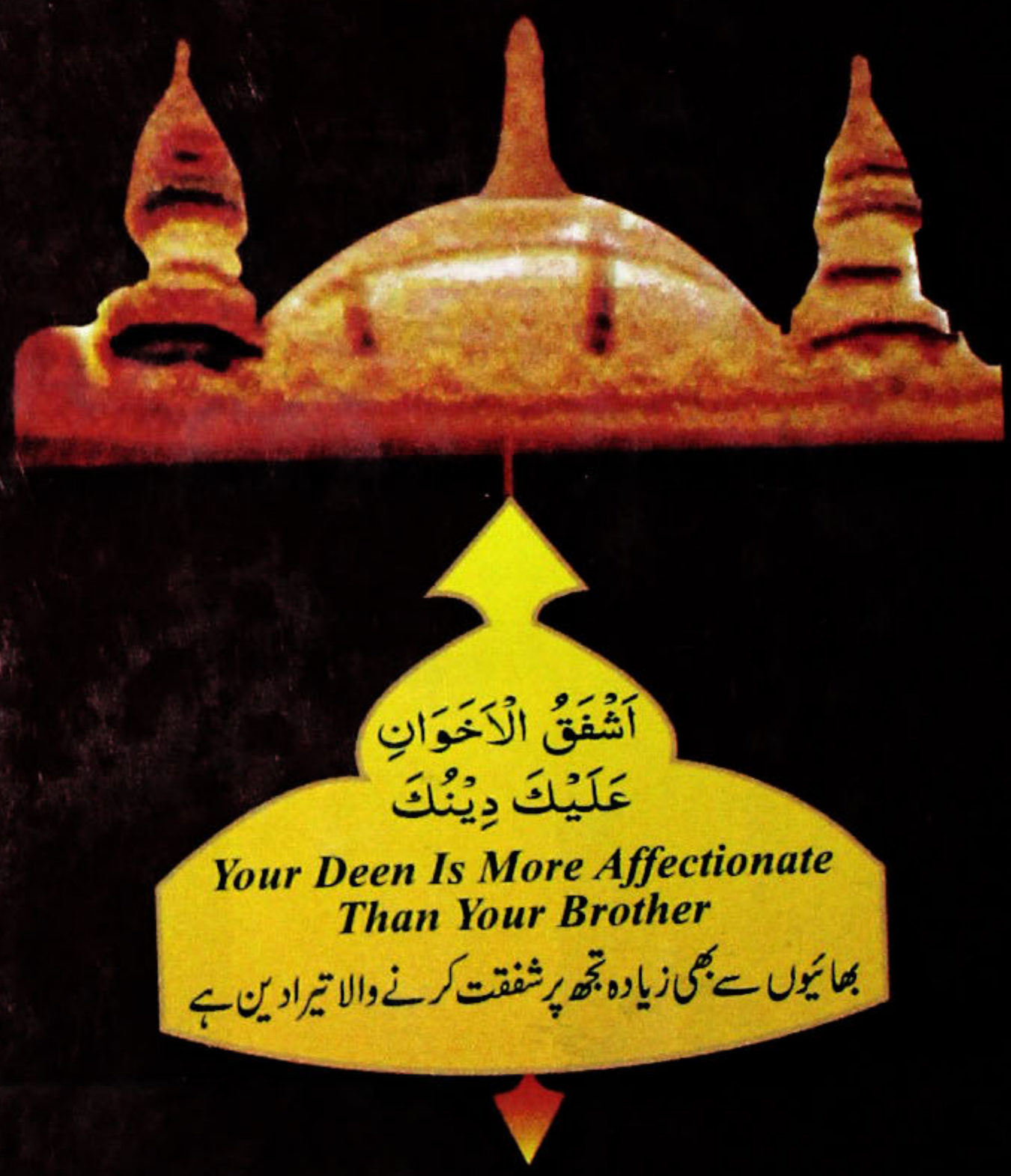
FAWAID-E-RUKNI

(A Compendium of Benefactions)

by

Sufi Saint

Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin
Ahmad Yahya Maneri (RahA)



Rendered into English

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Syed Sadrul Hasan

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"*FAWAID-E-RUKNI*"
(A COMPENDIUM OF BENEFACTIONS)
BY
SUFI SAINT
HAZRAT SHAIKH
SHARAFUDDIN AHMAD YAHYA MANERI (RahA)"
Rendered into English
By
SYED SADRUL HASAN

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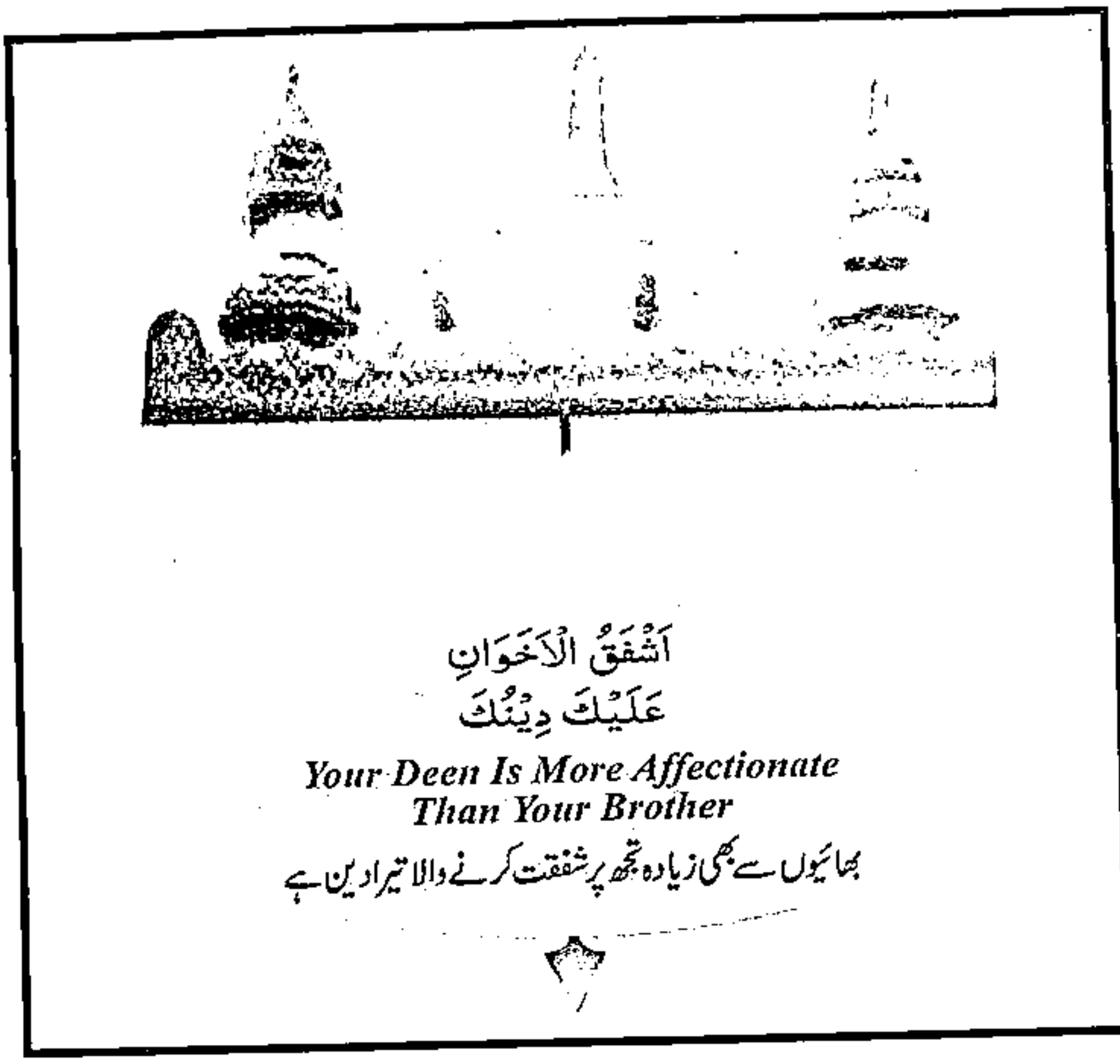

اَشْفَقُ الْاَخَوَانِ
عَلَيْكَ دِيْنُكَ

Your Deen Is More Affectionate Than Your Brother

بھائیوں سے بھی زیادہ تجھ پر شفقت کرنے والا تیرا دین ہے

The Basics Objectives of Bazm-e-Firdausia Trust

The foremost obligation and the most sacred duty of those who are truly knowledgeable are that the ethical behaviour and the practices of human beings be cultured and perfected. In the first instance, this requires that the principles and working details of graceful ethics, ascetism and God consciousness, chastity and morality, benevolence and kindness affability and forgiveness, resolve and steadfastness, sacrifice and mercy, dignity and contentment, be properly established and thereafter their practical teachings be propagated the world over.

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Labour of Love

In an era when Islam is under vicious attack apparently due to the belligerency of a reactionary minority, it is hoped that reading some pieces from the writings of the Sufis (God fearing and God conscious people) can help Muslims stand up against the onslaughts of their own extremists and show its gentler face to those who criticize the faith. Through this book we intend to show the continuity of the high Islam that sustained itself through centuries and that we can use our own spiritual resources to nullify the narrow interpretations of the true faith.

Sufism at its best is real Tasawwuf and at its worst is pseudo-Sufism. At its best, Sufism is the most successful and the enduring of all human attempts to keep idealism and purity of spirit intact. At its worst pseudo-Sufism practices do not conform to the true teachings. But this dichotomy, perhaps, can be seen in all cultures based on religion or secular cultures such as communism. Regardless of the debate about the gap between ideologies and their practices, it cannot be denied that mysticism has been a tradition well-entrenched in Eastern societies. Sufism is also a kind of mysticism but it is rooted in Islam and has influenced millions of lives through the course of history.

The humility and hatred for bigotry that have been the characteristics of all true Sufis brought them closer to the common man as opposed to the elite of their time. More than anywhere else, South Asia has a strong history of mystics, Sufis and saints who prompted the cause of the sectarian harmony and inter-faith tolerance.

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The advent of the Muslims in Bihar began around 1200 A.D. Makhdoom-e-Jahan, Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri's (Rah A) contributions to cause of Islam has been outstanding. For about sixty years he carried out his missionary work. The number of his disciples is reported to have been around a hundred thousand who came not only from different places of Bihar but also from the rest of India and even from outside India such as Bokhara and Hamdan. His extensive works on teachings of Tasawwuf have been regarded as authoritative literatures on Tasawwuf which found wide readership in the circle of Sufia of all Sufi orders and in their Khanquahs. This small book was written at the request of Haji Raknuddin (Rah A) who was proceeding for Hajj. This book contains twenty-nine chapters, and each chapter is called Fawaed. It was translated into Urdu for the first time by Hafiz Syed Shah Muhammad Shafi, son of Syed Shah Amin Ahmed Firdausi (Rah A) which was serialized in journal Al-Amin, but was not collectively published as a separate book. Hafiz Syed Shah Muhammad Shafi remarks that men of vision can benefit from it and those who seek closeness to Allah may be blessed.

I made it a point to read daily one fawaed as a wazeefa and this has brought me closer to my ideal. Since the time I have been associated with the written material of Makhdoom-e-Jahan, I have constantly experienced the benevolence and kindness of the Almighty Lord, through the blessings of Makhdoom-e-Jahan.

I have been fortunate enough to visit the shrine of Makhdoom-e-Jahan in 2007, and the journey itself was not only a blessing but a revelation. I had not been told about

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my forefathers as my father died young and unfotunately could not impart the knowledge and facts about my ancestors as I (a teenager) was away from home (in the army) most of the time. It was here in Bihar Sharif at the Makhdoom's grave that facts about my family dawned on me. While I was lost in embracing the grave my heart was filled with awe and an inexplicable feeling gripped my heart. Suddenly it appeared that Makhdoom-e-Jahan was telling me to turn back and look who was standing behind me, Unmistably it was Zain Badr Arabi, who had once been told by Makhdoom-e-Jahan "I accept you, your family members, and all relations Remain composed, if I am honoured with Allah's blessing, I would not forsake anybody." Reminiscing, I now realize that whatever is being done by me in terms of spreading the Makhdoom's message, works, teachings, is actually not me but the powerful directives of the Makhdoom himself and it is the continuity of the work of Zain Badr Arabi. . Twenty days stay in India was something which cannot be forgotten and its reminiscences are always nostalgic.

میری خاک بھی اڑے گی بہ آدب تیری گلی میں تیرے آستاں سے اونچا نہ میرا غبار ہوگا

در میکدہ پہ سجدہ یہ زہے نیازمندی جیسے کہتے ہیں محیؔ وہی بادہ خوار ہوگا

Our trust has published 3 editions of Fawaed-e-Rukni coupled with Aurad-e-Sharafi, a suggested reading material to be included in one's regular observance of prayers and recitations. All the three editions have been well received. In 2005 the Sindhi version of Fawaed-e-Rukni was also published which also attracted wider readership in Sindhi speaking circles.

Makhdoom's entire works are in Farsi (Persian) since it was

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the language of the court and conversation of his time. Over the years, many of these writings have been lost, and therefore effort is being made to publish the original versions of the available manuscripts. Which indeed are in Persian. To start with we plan to publish the original Persian version of Fawaed-e-Rukni. This English version is being published to cater to the needs of a group or groups of people who find difficulty in reading and understanding Urdu.

I deeply appreciate and acknowledge with gratitude the efforts of Syed Sadrul Hasan in translating this book in English. Inspite of his age he took up this monumental task of translating this book. Indeed, I am greatly indebted to him. May Allah honour him and his family in both the worlds.

I am very grateful and thankful to Allah that my family has fully supported and encouraged me in this cause and my three sons Talha, Haris and Qaseem are now my disciple.

In conclusion, I pray that all Muslims, through the blessings of the Prophet (SAW) and the illustrious Sufia, may experience the beneficence and kindness of Allah (SWT). May Allah shower His choicest blessings on our Prophet (SAW) Ameen! *Darvaishoan ka Ghulam aur Unkay Ghulamon ka Shaida.*

Capt (Retd) Syed Shah Ghulam Mohiuddin, Sharafi Firdausi
Ameer, Bazm-e-Firdausia Trust. Karachi ,
June 12, 2010.

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PREFACE

All praise be to Allah (SWT) who sent His Prophets for the guidance of mankind, and Salaat-o-Salaam on the last of the Prophets, Muhammad (SAW), his progenies and his companions.

Fawaed-e-Rukni was authored by Makhdoom-e-Jahan Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri at the request of one of his disciples, Haji Ruknuddin , who wanted something written for him which might serve him as the companion guide during his pilgrimage to the holy places. The original book was written in Persian. It was translated in Urdu by Dr. Muhammad Ali Arshad Sharafi Firdausi under the auspices of Khanquah-e- Moazzam, Bihar Sharif, of which there have appeared three editions in Pakistan published by Bazm-e-Firdausia (Trust) Karachi. This translated version has been used for rendering the book into English. No copy of the Persian text has been available here, so the English translation is based entirely on Dr. Arshad's Urdu version. Lately a hand-written Persian text has become available, which is still under study.

In this English translation, the terminologies of Tasawwuf have been used as such in the running text which are immediately followed by their closest possible English equivalents given in parenthesis.

Also these words have been italicized and even capitalized to indicate that these words have to be understood in the technical sense and not in the literal

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sense. The translations of the Quranic verses have been copied from M.M. Pickthall's ' The meaning of Glorious Koran'. Efforts have been made to translate the book as faithfully as possible.

The following abbreviations have been used:

AS : Alaihis Salam
SWT : Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala
SAW : Sullul Laho Alaihe Wasallam
RA : Razi Allah-o-Anho / Anha
Rah A : Rahmatul Lah Alaih

Providence has been very kind to me : I had the privilege of having brought up under the care of my parents who developed in me the passion for islamic learning and its way of life.My father, Late Syed Hadi Hasan, the disciple and khalifa of Syed Shah Wasi Ahmad alias Shah Barati.Khanquah-e-Moazzam, Bihar Sharif has also been my spiritual mentor (shaikh) who admitted me into silsila-i-Firdausia.And my mother's love and affection has alwys been a source of great inspiration to me. May Allah bless my parrents with his beneficence! Ameen!

Thanks are due to Bazm-e-Firdausia Trust for the publication of this book. I must thank Mr. Syed Ghulam Mohiuddin for inspiring me to undertake this work and for getting it published. I also thank Muhammad Akhter Sayeed who composed the book on the computer from my manuscript written in long hand.

Syed Sadrul Hasan.
July, 2010

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PREFACE
By
Hazrat Ruknuddin, (Rah A)
(The pilgrim to the holy places)

All praise be to Allah, the Creator of the universe, Who blessed the entity of man with the tiding: " Whom he loveth and who love Him": (Al-Maida, verse 54). He (Allah) graced His friend stature by the tiding: "My friends are under my Robe, and none other than Me recognize them". He elevated them, to such heights where from they say: "I have the special (exclusive) time with Allah wherein neither the exalted angels nor the Prophets are given audience".

May the soul of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the king of the lovers and the crown of the secrets of enlightenment, be blessed with great many *darood-o-salam*; it had been because of Him that the Prophets were blessed with saintliness, and it has been through following him that the robe of Allah's friendship has befitted the body of *Aulia* (Allah's friends). If he (Prophet Muhammad (SAW)) had not been there, there would have not existed anything, neither the heavens, nor the angels, nor Arsh, nor Kursi, nor Adam, nor man; "if you were not there, I would have not created the heavens". May Allah shower His blessings on the Prophet's companions and his caliphs who glittered like stars in the presence of the bright full-moon (i.e. the Prophet (SAW)), and who have been adorned with special robes. The Prophet (SAW) said: "My companions are like stars, whomsoever you follow (as your guide) you will be blessed to become the righteous person".To conclude, Haji Ruknuddin, the pilgrim of the holy places, requested the

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Qutub-ul-Mashaikh, the pick of the world and exalted, Shaikh Sharaful Haque Wad Deen Ahmad Yahya Maneri (May Allah bless the Muslims with long years of his company!) to write down for his guidance something, by way of benefaction, from his (Makhdoom's) letters, so that he may keep it as his comforting companion in his travels and at home. In his great affection in which he always held him, he conceded to his request and he wrote down in his own hand, these benefactions for his guidance, as well as for the guidance of all Muslims (young or old). Whoever studies them with devotion - not casually - he would be benefited so much that it could not be described in words, and he would vision things that could not be expressed in writing. It is only by Allah's grace that one keeps safe from committing sins and does righteous deeds.

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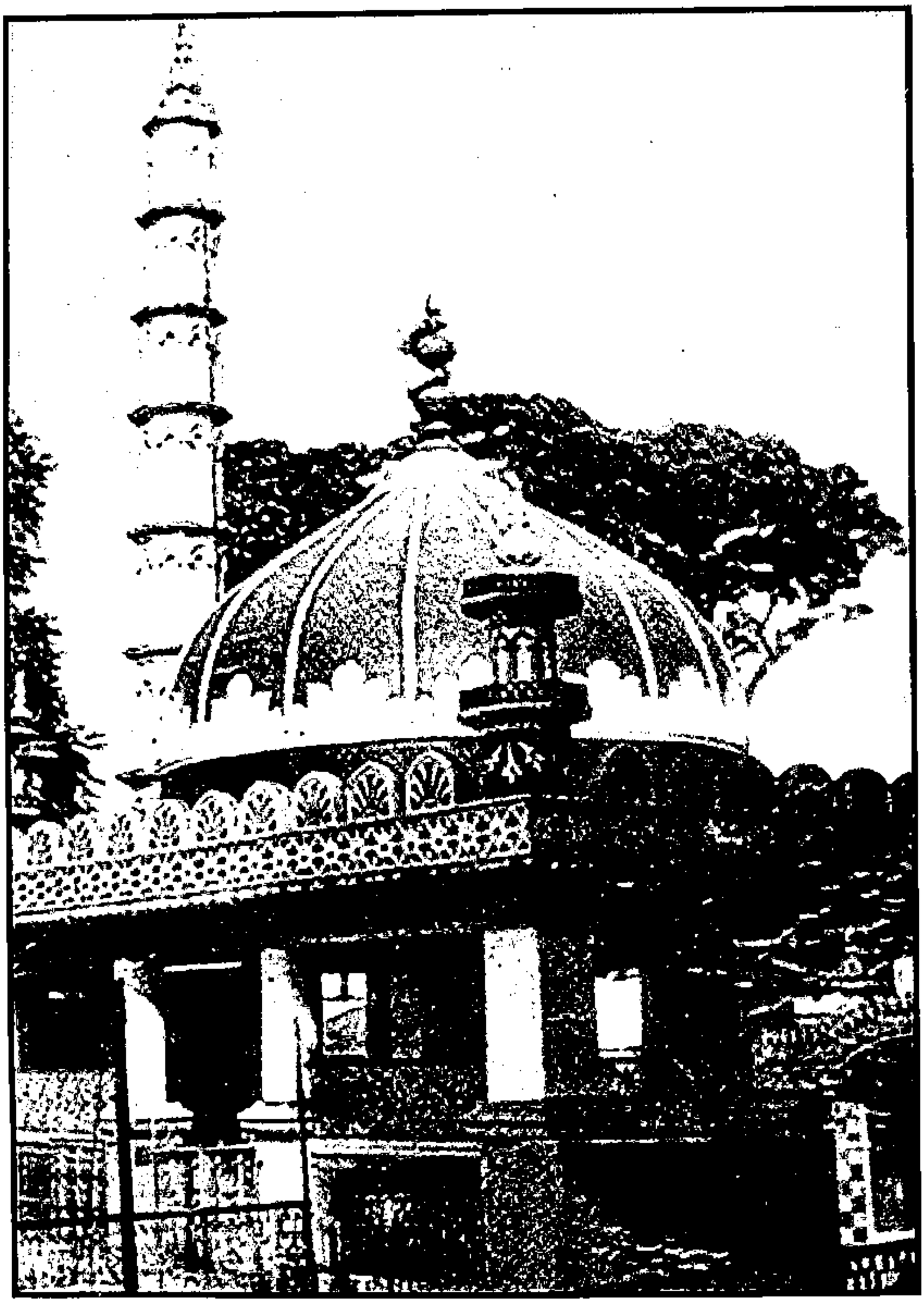

A VIEW OF MAKHDOOM-E-JAHAN'S TOMB
(BIHAR SHARIF, INDIA)

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Life Sketch of Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmed Yahya Maneri (Rah A)

Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmed Yahya Maneri, widely acknowledged as 'Makhdoomul Mulk' for his highly spiritual attainments, and popularly known simply as 'Makhdoom Saheb' was born in Maner, a town approximately 20 miles from Patna in the state of Bihar (India) in the year 1263 AD (661 Hijri). His ancestors came from Quds al-Khalil, a suburb of Bait-al-Maqdis. As reports say, the great grandfather of Makhdoomul Mulk, Imam Taj Faqih, had a vision of the Prophet (SAW) asking him to go to Bihar to rescue a solitary Muslim living there under the agonies of the oppression of the Raja (ruler) of the place. Imam Taj Faqih, with his son, set out for Bihar on the assigned mission; some others also joined him on the way. Having reached Bihar and after having subdued the Raja, he himself returned back to his home in Bait-al-Maqdis leaving behind his sons. He had three sons, Israel, Ismail and Abdul Aziz; they all settled in Maner; Makhdoom Yahya Maneri is the son of Makhdoom Israel ibn Taj Faqih, who had four sons, Makhdoomul Mulk being his second son.

Makhdoomul Mulk had his early education at home, the details of which we know very little. But the epoch in his educational career was his studentship under Shaikh Sharafuddin Abu Tawwama, an outstanding scholar of the time, the master of all the branches of Islamic knowledge, as also the mundane knowledge of the time including occult

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knowledge of Heimia, Seimia and Chemia. While Shaikh Abu Tawwama was at Delhi, he had great following of his admirers and followers which;some say, was viewed by the ruler of Delhi as a threat to his rule. Shaikh Abu Tawwama was, therefore, asked to leave Delhi and go to Bengal. On his way to Bengal, the Shaikh passed through Maner, where he was hosted by Makhdoom Yahya. Here, Shaikh Tawwama saw the spark in young Sharafuddin ibn Yahya Maneri, who also had been told on the erudition of Shaikh Tawwama. Young Sharafuddin accompanied Shaikh Abu Tawwama to Sonargaon, a township now close to Dacca on the other side of the river, which was the then capital city of Bengal. Here Sharafuddin, the would-be Makhdoomul Mulk, spent some 22 years (most likely 12 years) as the chosen student of Shaikh Abu Tawwama, the Shaikh became so fond of him that he married his daughter to his student,Sharafuddin.

On hearing about the sad demise of his father, Makhdoom Yahya Maneri, he (Makhdoomul Mulk) rushed to Maner with his son, Zakiuddin. Having spent the long years studying at Sonargaon he (Makhdoomul Mulk) felt satiated with the outwardly part of Islamic knowledge, including even the bookish knowledge of 'Tasawwuf'. His inner-self was, however, now looking for a spiritual guide. He gave his son, Zakiuddin, to the care of his mother, and sought her permission to let him now seek the way to spiritual ecstasy. He with his elder brother, Makhdoom Jaliluddin (more correctly khaliluddin),then set out for Dehli,the well-known centre of great scholars and spiritual leaders. At Delhi, he visited many of the spiritual leaders: he was profoundly impressed by Bu Ali Qalander Shaikh Sharafuddin Panipati

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whom he found in a state of meditative trance, completely detached from the world around him, and as such incapable of becoming a spiritual guide. He then visited Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya, the most venerated spiritual leader of the time, and requested him to admit him as his spiritual disciple. Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya declined, for he said that, much as he would li ke to have him as his disciple, his spiritual training had been assigned to some other Shaikh. At this, Makhdoomul-Mulk felt very dejected: at the suggestion of his elder brother, he agreed to visit Shaikh, Najeebuddin Firdausi, highly respected for his piety but relatively a less-known figure. While on way to Shaikh Najibuddin's place, Mukhdoomul Mulk felt an unusual awe gripping his heart. He got convinced that he had come to the right place. Shaikh Najeebuddin greeted them enthusiastically, admitted him and his brother as his disciple, spent some time with Makhdoomul Mulk giving him the necessary instructions, passed on to him the 'Khilafat Nama' (letter of authorisation to serve as his spiritual deputy which had been written some 12 years back on the instruction of the Prophet (SAW), assured him that his spiritual teaching would be directly under the care of the Prophet (SAW), and then bade farewell to them instructing them not to return back if they heard any untoward news on the way. On his return journey, Makhdoomul Mulk felt an ever-increasing feeling of grievous emotions that gripped his heart; when he reached Bihiya Jungles (District Birbhoom in Bihar), he was so over-powered with the feeling that he ran and disappeared into the forest. He spent some 12 years in these forests;
from there he moved to Rajgir hills, and altogether he spent

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some 30 years in isolation taking the most rigorous devotional exercises for higher spiritual attainments. Thereafter, he started appearing in public for Fridays prayers in Bihar Sharif (a town in Bihar state popularly known as Bihar Sharif) where people started flocking around him. He was ultimately persuaded to settle down in Bihar for the benefit of the people at large. In Bihar, Makhdoomul Mulk's place was now humming with people of all sorts: There were those who would come for seeking Makhdoom's blessings and for the relief of their pains and problems; there were those who would come for learning the Islamic faith; there were those who wanted to be benefited from Makhdoom's discourses and to participate in the discussion that were held, and indeed, there were those who would like to be tutored in the 'Tasawwuf' ways for spiritual attainments.

For the generations to follow, Makhdoom has left behind two great categories of educational/instructional materials, namely the records of the academic sessions held regularly by him (i.e. Malfoozat), and the letters he wrote to his disciples, government functionaries and others in reply to their queries, as also the letters that he wrote on his own. Amongst his letters, there are extant three notable collections: Hundred Letters' (*Maktubaat-e-Sadi*), ' Two Hundred Letters' (*Maktubaat-e-Do Sadi*), 'Twenty eight Letters' (Maktubaat-e-Bist-o-Hasht).The 'Two Hundred Letters' comprise letters written by the Makhdoom essentially in reply to queries or as advice; the 'Twenty eight Letters' were written to his most adored disciple, Maulana Muzaffar Shams Bulkhi, and are, infact, those which

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escaped burial with the Maulana who had strictly instructed that the total collection of letters written by the Makhdoom to him be buried with him, for they contained materials that were meant to guide him through extraordinary spiritual experiences that he passed through and were thus exclusively meant for him and were beyond the comprehension of even the relatively accomplished persons having spiritual experiences of 'Tasawwuf'.

The 'Hundred Letters' of Makhdoom are of special significance. These are the letters written at the request of one of his disciples, Shamsuddin (Brother Shamsuddin, as the Makhdoom addresses him), the Governor of Chausa, who, because of his pre-occupation with the state matter, found it difficult to attend the instructional sitting held by the makhdoom.

These letters have, therefore, been written as textual materials for a full-fledged instructional course in 'Tasawwuf' (Islamic spiritualism). Thus, taken as a whole, this collection of 'Hundred Letters' can be regarded as a unique text-book on 'Tasawwuf'. This collection has been received with great enthusiasm in the spiritual circles right from the days of the Makhdoom, it became an authoritative compendium on 'Tasawwuf' and has been in use for instructional courses in 'Khanquahs.' An extant copy of this book, the personal possession of Makhdoom Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, the most adored disciple of the Makhdoom, containing annotation written in his own hand, speaks volumes about this great work.

It may be noted that there has been relatively little tradition

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of writing books and treatise on 'Tasawwuf' by the great spiritual leaders, possibly because, in 'Tasawwuf', a disciple passes through experiences which may be exclusively personal needing direct guidance from the spiritual mentor. Indeed, there are some books available on the subject, such as 'Ghuniatual Talibeen' by Shaikh Abdul Quadir Jilani, 'Ahyail Uloom' by Imam Ghazali, 'Aadabul Murideen' by Hazrat Ziauddin Abu Najeeb Suharwardy, 'Awariful Maarif' by Shaikh Shahabuddin Suharwardy, 'Kashful Mahjoob' by Hazrat Syed Ali Hajweri popularly known as Data Ganj Baksh and so on. Indeed, there have been the traditions of letter-writing by the spiritual leaders to their contemporaries/spiritual leaders, government functionaries and heads of state, as also to their disciples. One may, for example, refer to 'Kitab-al-Luma' and mystique predicateur a la Qarawiyn de Fes Abbad de Ronda (1332 - 1390) for details of such letters written by the 'Sufis' of the Chisti and Suharwardy Orders, such as Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya, Syed Mohammad Hasan Gesu Draz, Syed Ashraf Jehangir Samnani, Abdul Quddus Gangohi, Hameeduddin Nagori etc.

Amongst the 'Sufis' of the Firdausia Order in India, the letters written by Makhdoomul Mulk, Shaikh Sharafuddin ibn Ahmad Yahya Maneri, occupy a special place, notable for style, content and the lucid and yet guarded expositions of many intricate matters of 'Tasawwuf'; these letters are educative both to the novice and the accomplished one in this subject. The letters of the Makhdoom's most adored disciple,Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi (under publication by Firdausia Trust) and of the Makhdoom's second

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successor to his spiritual lineage, Makhdoom Hussain Nausha-e-Tauheed, the nephew of Maulana Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, deserve special mention (Makhdoom Hussain's letters have been published in 1999 by Bazm-e-Firdausia Trust, Karachi).

The 'Hundred Letters' written by Makhdoomul Mulk, as mentioned earlier, are, in fact, written as textual materials for instructional courses in 'Tasawwuf', and as such may be compared with Kashful Mahjoob written by Syed Ali Hajweri. While Kashful Mahjoob gives detailed expositions of the various schools of thought and also dwell upon some issues of Shariat, the 'Hundred Letters' are essentially instructional materials of practical interest to practising disciples.

The 'Hundred Letters' as also other books authored by Makhdoomul Mulk, are written in the Persian language. Until half a century back, the Muslim leadership of India and Central Asia had little difficulty in following the Persian language. However, the situation is now hanged and there is a need for these works to be translated into other languages. It has already been rendered into Urdu language by no lesser authorities than Makhdoom's direct descendants belonging to the lineage of disciples of the Makhdoom's Khanquah. The book has already been translated and published in Bengali language. English translation first appeared in Gaya (Bihar) in 1908: a Hindu scholar did this. however, Father Paul Jackson in 1976, made special efforts to procure authentic copies of the original text, and in this search he discovered the personal copy of Maulana

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Muzaffar Shams Balkhi containing marginal annotation in Maulana's own hand.

Paul Jackson, a Christian missionary, was born in Brisbane, Australia in 1937. He attended a number of Catholic schools in Queensland and spent seven years at Marist Brothers College, Ashgrove, Brisbane. He joined Society of Jesus, Melbourne in 1956, came to Hazaribagh (Bihar, India) in 1960 on an assignment, served as a teacher for three and a half years, studied Hindi and served as a Head Master in a Hindi medium school in Mahesmundi and became a Chaplain in Grideh. He went to Delhi in 1972 ; there he studied Urdu and worked for his M.A. in History. Thereafter, he went to Shiraz in 1972 where he studied Persian; he returned back to Hazaribagh, and then went to Patna where he took up the translation of the 'Hundred Letters' for his Ph.D work, which is now already published. He has also translated Makhtoobat-e-Do Sadi with the name of "In quest of God." He also translated Khan-e-Pur Naemat. Presently Ma'adun-ul-Ma'anee is being translated by him.

Makhdoomul Mulk has had such a great influence amongst all the Sufi Orders that his works have had been attracting ever-increasing readership.

The total number of works attributed to Makhdoomul Mulk is said to have been very large, and only some 35 are reported to be extant . Some of the ones already published are: *Maktubaat-e-Sadi*. i.e. 'Hundred Letters'; "*Maktoobaat-e-Do Sadi*; *Maktoobaat-e-Bist-o-Hasht*; *Ma'adun-ul-Ma'anee*; *Shahrah-e-Aadab-ul-Murideen*;

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Fawaed-e-Rukni; Irshaad-ut-Talibeen; Irshad-us-Salikeen; Fawaed-ul-Murideen; Moonis-ul-Murideen; Aurad-e-Sharafi; Auraad-e-Ausat; Aurad-e-Kalan; Mukhkh-ul-Ma'ani; Khaan-e-Pur Neamat; Rahat-ul-quloob."

Mukhdoomul-Mulk passed away at the age of about 121 years in the year 782 Hijri. May Allah grant him His favours, 'Aameen !'

THE LAST HOURS

The last hours of Makhdoom-e-Jahan (Rah A) had come. Those who were close, the disciples and the admirers, were all highly perturbed. But even in those hours, he consoled them all, and said, "If I am treated with favours, I shall take care of you all". Those who were present there in those hours had a profound recollection of every moment of those hours. Zain Badr Arabi had noted down the whole account of this occasion soon after the passing away of Makhdoom-e-Jahan (Rah A), and had also shown this account to the people who had been there in order to recheck with them this account. Not many illustrious mystics are known whose accounts of their last hours have been recorded in such details. This account of Zain Badr Arabi is popularly known as *'Wafat Nama'*. The full text of this account is given below: this is taken from Ma'adan-ul-Ma'ani1, which itself has been taken from Maulana Abul Hasan Nadvi's book "*Daawat-wa-Azeemat*"

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Vol.3 (Maulana has rendered in Urdu the original Persian text).

"It was Wednesday, the 5th of Shawwal 782 Hijri. I visited him; after *Fajr* prayer, he was sitting resting against a pillow, in the new room constructed by Malik-ul-Sharq Nizamuddin Khwaja Malik. His younger brother and the main person in attendance, Shaikh Jaliluddin, and a few others, friends and attendants, who had for the last few nights been spending sleepless nights attending to Makhdoom-e-Jahan (Rah A), had been present there. Among them were Qazi Shamsuddin, Maulana Shahabuddin (the nephew of Khwaja Meena), Maulana Ibrahim, Maulana Aamoon, Qazi Mian, Hilal, Atique and others. Makhdoom-e-Jahan (Rah A) started reciting

لاحول ولا قوة الا باللّٰه العلی العظیم .

La haula wala qoowata illa bil La hil-A lee-il-A zeem

(translation: It is simply by Allah's (SWT) grace that one can keep away from committing sins, and be prompted to doing good deeds) and asked the people present to recite it as well. He then smiled and said (expressing his amazement), "*Subhan A llah* (Allah is holy), that cursed creature -- Satan -- wants to distract me from the belief of *Tauhid* (Being and Unity of Allah). By Allah's grace, who would give him an ear!" He again recited

لاحول ولا قوة الا باللّٰه العلی العظیم .

Lah haul wala qoowata illa bil Lah il A lee-il- A zeem and asked

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others present also to recite. Afterwards, he got busy with his routine *wird-o-wazaef* (routine recitals and prayers) which he continued until *chasht* (late breakfast time) time. A little later, he busied himself in reciting Allah's eulogy (i.e. *hamd-o-sana*): he recited

الحمد لله الحمد لله

Alhamd-o-lil Lah Alhamd-o-lil Lah (praise be to Allah, praise be to Allah) rather audibly. He said Allah has been verykind -

المنّة لله المنّة لله

A l-mimato lil Lah, A l-mimato lil La (Allah is kind)" -- he repeated these several times with visible expression of his inner feelings of happiness and delight. And he went on repeating

الحمد لله الحمد لله المنته لله المنته لله.

A l-hamdo-lil Lah A l-hamdolil Lah A l-mimato-lil- Llah
A l-mimato-lil Lah.

Later on, he came out of the room and sat in the courtyard reclining against a pillow. A little later, he extended his hands as though he wanted to shake hands. He held the hands of Qazi Shamsuddin, and held them for quite a while. He then released his hands. This was the beginning of bidding farewell to his attendants. Then he held the hands of Qazi Zahid, and, holding it close to his chest, he said: 'We are the same, we are the same.' He then said: 'Nay, we are the same *diwana* (overwhelmed by Allah's love); we are

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the same *diwana*'. Then he was overtaken by a special sense of humility and he said, 'Nay, we are the dirt sticking to the foot-wear of those who are *diwanay*.' Thereafter, he turned towards everybody and kissed their hands and beards, and enjoined them all to always repose hope in Allah's Forgiveness and Blessings, and then recited audibly

لاتقنطو من رحمته اللّٰه ان اللّٰه يغفر الذنوب جميعا.

La taqnatoo mir Rahma-til Lah. Innal Laha-yeghferuz zunuba jameiya (Never give up hope on Allah's mercy: verily Allah (SWT) will forgive all your sins). Then he recited the following verse:

لاحول ولا قوة الا باللّٰه العلي العظيم.
الحمد للّٰه الحمد للّٰه
المنّة للّٰه المنّة للّٰه
لاتقنطو من رحمته اللّٰه ان اللّٰه يغفر الذنوب جميعا.

خدایا رحمتت دریائے عام است ازانجا قطرے برما تمام است

(Translation: O Allah Your blessings are like a flowing river for the benefit of everybody; A drop from it is all we need).
Then he turned towards the people present there and said: "Tomorrow if you are asked what you have brought, say *'La taqnatu mir rahmat il Lah'*: if I am asked, I would say the same. Then he started reciting *Kalama-i-Shahadat* audiby.

اشهد ان لا اله الا اللّٰه وحده لاشريك له واشهدوان محمدً عبده ورسوله.

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Ashhado al la ilaha illul Lah wahdahu la sharika lahu wa ashhado anna Mohammadan abduhu wa rasooluhu (translation: I bear witness that there is none to be worshipped except Allah, and He is one and has no partner, Muhammad is His servant and prophet). He also recited :

رضيت باللّٰه ربا و بالا سلام دينا و بمحمد صلى اللّٰه عليه وسلم نبيا و
بالقران اما ماو بالكعبته قبله وبالمومنين اخوانا و بالجته ثوابا و بالنا رعذابا

Razita billah Rabbaun wa bil Islame dinaun wa ba Muhammadin sullah-o-alaihay wa sallam nabiaun wa bil Qurane imamaun wa bil Kabate qiblataun wa bil mumina ikhwanaun wa bil jannata sawaabaun wa bin naare azaaba (Translation : I believe that Allah is my sustainer, Islam is my *Deen*, Muhammad (SAW) is my prophet, Quran is my leader, Ka'aba is my *Qibla*, the *Momins* are my brethren, paradise is the reward from Allah, and hell is the punishment from Allah).

Then he turned towards Maulana Taquiuddin Odhi,
and, extending his hands towards him, he said: "May You be blessed in the Hereafter!" He treated him with great affection and kindness. Then he called `Aamoon`; at that moment, Maulana Aamoon was in the room; hearing the call for him, he rushed to Makhdoom-e-Jahan, who held his hands and rubbed them against his face and then said:"You have served me well, rest assured, I will never forsake you; we shall live together; if you are asked what you have brought, say

لاتقنطوا من رحمة اللّٰه ان اللّٰه يغفر الذنوب جميعا.
La taqnatoo mir rahmat-il-lah innal Laha yeghferuz zunuba jameiya;

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if I am asked I would say the same. Tell the friends not to be despondent: if I get blessed with Allah`s favours, I shall not forsake any one" Then he turned towards Hilal and Atique and said "You kept me happy and served me very well ; just as I have been happy with you, you too will always remain happy." He patted Mian Hilal on the back three times and said: "You will always have your wish fulfilled." At that moment, both legs of Makhdoom-e-Jahan were in the lap of Mian Hilal, and he was showing great kindness towards him.

During this time, Maulana Shahbudddin Nagori turned up. Makhdoom-e-Jahan kissed his face, beard and turban several times; he was sighing and reciting

الحمد للّٰہ الحمد للّٰہ

Alhamdo lil Lah, Allahmdo lil Lah (All praise be to Allah). Then he lowered down his hands, and started reciting *darood* (formal way for praying for the Prophet (SAW)). Maulana Shahbuddin was also looking at Makhdoom-e-Jahan, and was reciting *darood.* Then he mentioned the name of Maulana Shahabuddin, the nephew (sister`s son) of Khwaja Moin and said: "He served me immensely; he remained close to me; he benefited from my company; may he be blessed!" At that moment, Maulana Shahabuddin mentioned the names of Maulana Muzaffer and Maulana Nasiruddin Jawnpuri, and asked him what he had to say about them. Makhdoom-e-Jahan was visibly delighted and, with his fingers pointing towards his chest, said smilingly: "Muzaffer is my life, and my beloved; Maulana Nasiruddin is also like him; they both are gifted with the attributes that are necessary for leadership and *khilafat*; whatever I said to

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them was meant to save them from the tribulations of the people (It could not be ascertained as to what incident it referred to)".

At this occasion, Maulana Shahabuddin presented...* and requested Makhdoom-e-Jahan to kindly accept them. The Makhdoom said: "I accept him. What to say of this, I accept your entire family." Thereafter, Makhdoom-e-Jahan presented him a cap. He requested the Makhdoom to readmit him as his disciple, which the Makhdoom did.

In the mean time, Qazi Mina had come; Mian Hilal introduced him and said: "He is Qazi Mina". Makhdoom-e-Jahan said: "Qazi Mina, Qazi Mina". Qazi Mina responded that he was present, and then kissed the Makhdoom`s hands. The Makhdoom held his hands and rubbed them against his face and beard and said: "May Allah bless you! May you remain steadfast in your *Iman* (belief in Islam) in this world, as also at the time of passing away!" He also expressed his affection by saying 'Mina belongs to me'. Meanwhile Maulana Ibrahim had turned up; Makhdoom-e-Jahan rubbed his right hand on his beard, and said, "You have served me well, and stood by me fully. You will live in honour." Maulana Ibrahim asked whether** Makhdoom-e-Jahan was pleased with him. The Makhdoom responded: "I am pleased with everybody. You should also remain pleased with me: whatever there is, it is from my

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Notes:

* *The text here was not dear .*

***Both the published and hand-written copies contain a phrase whic possibly means "this morning today".*

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side." Then came Qazi N oorddin , brother of Qazi Shamshuddin. The Makhdoom held his hands, and in great affection, he kissed his face, beard, and hands several times. While he was all the time sighing, he said: "You have remained in my comany for quite along time, and have served me a lot. Allah willing, we shall live together". Then came Maulana Nizamuddin: the MakHdoom said that this poor man had left his home. and settled down in our place.Having said this, he took off his cap and gave it to him and prayed for his successful Hereaftar. He also prayed that Allah may help him accomplish his objective. Then he turned towards everybody, bade them farewell,and advised them to take care of their belief and *Deen*, and remain committed to them. Thereafter, Zain Badr Arabi, the author of this account, kissed the hands of MakHdoom-e-Jahan, and rubbed them on his eyes, head , and body. Makhdoom-e-Jahan asked who he was. He replied that it was his humble servant,and requested him that he may kindly be readmitted as his disciple. Makhdoom-e-Jahan said: "I accept you, your family members, and all relations. Remain composed, if I am honoured with Allah's blessing, forsake any body.

I (Badr Arabi) said: "After all you are Makhdoom; is there good tiding for Makhdoo's servants as well in the Hereafter?" Makhdoom-e-Jahan said: "One would very much hope so". Qazi Shamsuddin came and sat by the side of Makhdoom-e-Jahan. Maulana Shahabuddin, Hilal, and Atique asked: "What would you say abour Qazi Shamsuddin? Makhdoom-e.Jahan said: "What shall I say about Qazi Sahmsuddin! He is like my son, and I have also addressed him as brother in my letters. He has been

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autorized to speak about what *derishy* (*Derish*'s principles and practices) is. It has been because of him that Iwrote and spoke so much; otherwise who would have written!" Thereafter Shaikh Khaliluddin (shaikh Jaliluddin?), the brother and the main person in attendance, who was sitting by his side, held his hands. Makhdoom-e.Jahan looked at him and said: "Khalil, don't worry; the *ulama* and dervish will not forsake you. Malik Nizamuddin Khwaja Malik will come, convey to him my greetings and well wishes, and apologise to him on my behalf, and say to him that I have been happy with him and that he should also be happy ". He further said: "So long as Malik Nizamuddin is there, he will not forsake you".

Shaikh Khaliluddin was visibly perturbed; he had tears in his eyes. When Makhdoom-e-Jahan looked at him and found him heart-broken, he consoled him very affectionately and said: "Rest assured, and keep yourself composed". He then asked, " Who is he? Hilal said: "He is Maulana Mahmood Sufi". Makhdoom-e-Jahan very sorrowfully said: "I am worried about this poor man. He is lonely and forlorn". He then prayed that Allah may bless him in the Hereafter. Then came Qazi Khan Khalil. Makhdoom-e-Jahan said: "The poor Qazi is my old friend. He spent quite a bit of his time in my company. May Allah reward him, and bless him in the Hereafter! His sons are also my friends. May all be blessed in the Hereafter, and may they be spared from Hell fire!"

Then came Khwaja Moezuddin; Makhdoom-e-Jahan prayed for him and said: "May Allah (SWT) bless him in the Hereafter, Then came Maulana Fazlullah, Makhdoom-e-Jahan said: "May Allah bless you in the

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Hereafter".Fatuha, the chef, then came and held his feet. The Makhdoom said: "Poor fatuha, whatever he was, he was after all mine". He prayed for him also that Allah (SWT) may bless him in the Hereafter. Then Maulana Shahabuddin presented himself. Hilal introduced him, and said that he was the brother of Haji Ruknudddin. Makhdoom-e-Jahan said: "May Allah bless you in the Hereafter! Take care of your *Iman* (the belief in Islam) and always repose hope in Allah (SWT) and recite

لاتقنطو من رحمته اللّٰه ان اللّٰه يغفر الذنوب جميعا.

`La taqnatu mir rahmat-il Lab irnal Laha yeghferuz zunuba jameiya`.

After some time, close to the time of *Zuhr* prayers, came Syed Zahiruddin together with his cousin (from the father's side). Makhdoom-e-Jahan held Syed Zahiruddin in his arms and very affectionately said: "This is the *Aaqbat* (the successful ending for the life in the Hereafter) that I talked about". Then he held him in his arms three times, and recited for the last time *La taqnatu mir rahmat-il Lab irnal Laha yeghferuz zunuba jameiya`*, and advised those present to repose great hope in the blessings and forgiveness of Allah. He then went to his room, and sat and talked with Syed Zaheeruddin for some time. Thereafter, Sultan Shah, *Pargana daar Rajgir,* came along with his son, and presented an oil for the relief of gases. The Makhdoom said that Maulana Nizamuddin too had brought this. He declined to take it, and then presented them with drinks and betel. Then Munawwar, the brother of Khalil, said that he wanted to be admitted as his disciple. The Makhdoom asked him to

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get close, and then extended his hands, and admitted him as his disciple. Then he asked for the scissors, and he cut his hair, and put a cap on his head. Then the Makhdoom asked him to offer two *raka'at salaa*t. In similar fashion, his sons also became the disciple, and they were also asked to follow what their father was instructed to do.

In the mean time, Qazi Alam Ahmad Mufti, Maulana Nizamuddin, and Mufti's brother, who were some of the very devoted disciples of Makhdoom-e-Jahan came, and very respectfully sat down facing Makhdoom-e-Jahan. At the same time, Amir Shahabuddin, the brother of Malik Hisamuddin, came with his son, and sat down. When the Makhdoom saw the boy, he asked him if he could recite *Panj ayah* (the last five verses of *Surah Fath).* Those who were present said that the boy was too young. Syed Zaheeruddin Mufti's son was also present. As Mian Hilal felt that the Makhdoom desired to listen the recitations of some verses from the holy Quran, he called the boy and asked him to recite the five verses. When Syed Zaheeruddin felt that the Makhdoom desires to listen the recitations from the holy Quran, he directed his son to do the recitation. The boy came forward, and sat down with respectful composure, and started reciting the last *ruku* (paragraph)of *Surah Fath: Muhammad-ur-Rasool-ul-lah wal lazeena*..... .

Makhdoom-e-Jahan, who had been resting, reclining against the pillow, sat down with his traditional respectful composure (i.e. sitting on his two legs lying flat facing backwards) and then listened to the recitation very attentively. When the boy reached '*Ley yaghiza bihimul kuffaar*', he became awe-stricken and could not continue

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further. On the prompting of the Makhdoom, he continued further. After he finished, Makhdoom-e-Jahan praised him and said, "He recites very well but gets awe-stricken`. The Makhdoom narrated the story of a dervish who sometimes felt the urge for hearing the recitation of the holy Quran, and sometimes he had little urge for it.

Afterwards, he directed Qazi Alam to serve drinks and betel-leaf, and wanted himself to be excused. He tried to take off his clothes and asked for water for performing *wudhu*. He pulled up the sleeve, and asked for his *miswak* (tooth brush), recited *"bismillah'* audibly, and then started performing the *wudhu*. He recited the prayers specified for the different stages of the *wudhu*. He washed his hands up to the elbow but forgot to wash the face. Shaikh Fariduddin reminded him of this omission. The Makhdoom started afresh, and recited all the specified prayers for the different stages of the *wudhu* very carefully. Mufti Syed Zahiruddin, and all others present, admired the great care taken in performing the *wudhu* under such conditions. Qazi Zahid tried to help in washing the feet; the Makhdoom asked him to stay back and completed the *wudhu* by himself. After performing the *wudhu*, he asked for the comb and combed his beard. Then he asked for the *mosalla* (prayer cloth) and offered two *raka'at salaat*. As he was exhausted, he rested for a while. Shaikh Jaliluddin suggested that he should go to the room, for it was getting cold. He stood up, put on his shoes, and started moving towards the room with one of his hands on the shoulder of Maulana Zahid and the other on the shoulder of Maulana Shahabuddin. In the room, he lied down on the skin of a tiger. Mian Munawwar requested him to get him admitted as his disciple. He extended his

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hands towards him, admitted him as his disciple, cut a little hair from the two sides of his head, put a cap on his head, and asked him to offer two *raka'at salaat*. He was the last person admitted as Makhdoom's disciple. At this occasion, a lady also turned up with her two sons and sought the blessings of the Makhdoom. After *Asr* prayer, and close to *Maghrib* time, the Makhdoom's attendants requested him to take rest on the bed. He went to the bed and took rest.

After *Maghrib* prayer, Shaikh Jaliluddin, Qazi Shamsuddin, Maulana Shahabuddin, Qazi Nooruddin, Hilal and Atique, and other friends and attendants who had been attending the Makhdoom, sat by the side of his bed. After some time, the Makhdoom started reciting *Bismillah* audibly. After reciting '*Bismillah*' several times, he recited

لااله الا انت سبحانك انى كنت من الظالمين

'La ilaha anta subhanaka inni kunto minaz zalimeen'.

Then he repeatedly recited

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

'Bismillah hir Rahman nir Raheem' quite audibly. Then he recited

Kalima-e-Shahadat, i.e.

اشهد ان لا اله الا اللّٰه وحده لاشريك له واشهد ان محمدا عبده ورسوله

Ashhado al lailaha illul Lah wahdaahu la sharika lahu wa ashhado anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasooluhu. Then he recited *'La haul wala qoowata illa bil Lah-il ali-il-azeem'.* Then for some time he continued reciting *Kalima-e-Shahadat.* Then he recited

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بسم اللّٰہ الرحمن الرحیم . بسم اللّٰہ الرحمن الرحیم . لااله الا اللّٰہ محمد رسول اللّٰہ

'Bismillahir Rahman nir Raheem, Lailaha illul Lah Muhammad-ur rasool-ul Lah' several times. After this, he repeated

محمد محمد محمد صل علی محمد و علیٰ آل محمدالخ

'Muhammad, Muhammad, Muhammad sulle ala Muhammad wa ala aale Muhammad... ... .' with the bottom of his heart, and ostensible ecstasy. Then he recited the verse

ربنا انزل علینا مائدة من السماء تا آخر ،رضیت باللّٰہ ربا و بالاسلام د یناً وبمحمد صلی اللّٰہ علیه وسلم نبیاء

'Rabbana anzil alaina maaedatun min -as- samaae ... ... upto the end of the *ayat* ; then he recited *Razeeta bil Lahe Rab baun wa bil Islam-e-dinaun wa be Muhammadin sullulaho alaihe wasulum nabeeya.* Thereafter he recited *Kalima-e-Tayyeba* three times, then he raised his hands towards the heaven, and with the profound devotion with which one prays to Allah recited the following:

اللّٰھم اصلح امة محمدً اللّٰھم ارحم امة محمدً اللّٰھم اغفر لامةمحمدً اللّٰھم تجا وزعن امة محمدً اللّٰھم اغث امة محمدً اللّٰھم النصرمن نصر دین محمدً اللّٰھم فرج عن امة محمدً فرجاعاجلا اللّٰھم اخذل من خذل دین محمدً برحمتك یا ارحم الرحمینؑ۔

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'Allahumma asleh ummate Muhammad,
'Allahumma arham ummate Muhammad,
'Allahumma ighfir be ummate Muhammad,
'Allahumma tajawaz an ummate Muhammad,
'Allahumma aghis ummate Muhammad,
'Allahummansur Man nasare deena Muhammad,
'Allahumma farrij an ummate Muhammad, farajan aajelan,
'Allahumakbzul min khazale deen Muhammad bi rahmateka ya arhamar Rahimeen'

Translation : O Allah, reform the followers of Muhammad (SAW); O Allah , have mercy on the followers of Muhammad (SAW); O Allah , forgive the followers of Muhammad (SAW); O Allah, pardon the followers of Muhammad (SAW);O Allah respond to the call (for help) of the followers of Muhammad (SAW).
O Allah, help triumph the Deen of Muhammad (SAW).
O Allah, grant happiness to the followers of Muhammad (SAW).
O Allah, disgrace those who disgrace the Deen of Muhammad (SAW) by the grace of Your beneficence , O beneficial and merciful.

Having recited these, his voice stopped; at this moment, he was reciting *`Lakhaufun alaihim wa la hum yahzanoon, La ilaha illul Lah'* (Translation: For them there is no fear and no grief. There is none to be worshipped except Allah). After this, he recited one time *Bismillah hir Rahman nir Raheem'*, and then breathed his last. This happened on Thursday night; the 6th of *Shawwal* 782 Hijri at Isha prayer time. The following day, on Thursday, at *Chaasht* (late breakfast) time, his burial took place.

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Zain Badr Arabi, in this account, has not given the details of *nimaz-e-janaza* (the funeral prayer). In *Lataef-e-Ashrafi*, authored by Haji Gharib Yemani, the disciple of Syed Ashraf Jahangir Samnani, it is so stated that Syed Ashraf Jahangir Samnani was on his way to Bengal when he passed through Bihar where he found the coffin of Makhdoom-e-Jahan waiting for the funeral prayer. In compliance with the will of the Makhdoom, the people there asked Syed Ashraf Jahangir Samnani to lead the funeral prayer, which he did . Matiul Imam, in his Ph.D dissertation, has shown his reservation about this account , for the reason that this is not mentioned in *'Wafat Nama'* of Zain Badr Arabi. Matiul Imam's reservation appear to be unfounded, for the *'Wafat Nama'* is silent on the issue as to who led the funeral prayer: the *'Wafat Nama'* is restricted to the accounts upto the last moments of Makhdoom-e-Jahan, and does not touch upon the events that followed thereafter, such as who led the funeral prayer, where he was laid to rest, etc.

Based upon the popular version, the events that followed after the passing away of the Makhdoom can be summarized as follows:

Makhdoom-e-Jahan had already prophesied that his funeral prayer shall be led by a *Syedzada* (descendant of the Prophet (SAW)) who would have abandoned his regal throne, and one who would be *Hafiz Qirat-e-Sab'a* (one who memorizes Quran and is well versed in all the seven authorized ways of recitation). In fact, Syed Ashraf Jahangir Samnani (Rah A) had set off for Bihar Sharif (Bihar Sharif did not fall on the usual route to Bengal, so he must have purposely come to Bihar Sharif) for the purpose of getting

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admitted as the disciple of Makhdoom-e-Jahan. Makhdoom-e-Jahan had already made it known, and had earmarked some of his relics to be handed over to him, and had instructed the people there to inform Syed Ashraf Jahangir Samnani (Rah A) that he was destined to be the disciple of Shah Alaul Haque (Rah A) in Pandwa. He had furthermore instructed them to present him with his relics and to request him to lead his funeral prayer. It did happen as the Makhdoom had willed, and Syed Ashraf Jahangir Samnani (Rah A), who was dressed in green clothes, led the funeral prayer.

As for the selection of his burial place, it is so stated that the Makhdoom was present at the burial time of Makhdoom Ahmad Chirmposh (Rah A). When the grave for the burial of Makhdoom Ahmad Chirmposh (Rah A) was dug, there were found some fingers. Therefore, Makhdoom-e-Jahan decided that the burial place for him should be away from the inhabited area. The Makhdoom, while returning back from the funeral of Makhdoom Ahmad Chirmposh, rested for some time in the place where his shrine is. His mother was laid to rest in this place before Makhdoom-e-Jahan.

Makhdoom-e-Jahan breathed his last on Thursday night, Shawwal 6, 782 Hijri, and his burial took place in the morning of 6th of Shawwal. His grave is earthen. The annual *urs* (commemorative gathering for the departed soul) of Makhdoom-e-Jahan is held in Bihar Sharif from 5th of Shawwal to 19th of Shawwal with proper devotion and dignity. Its details have been given by Mohammad Moinuddin Dardayi in his book '*Tarikh-e-Silsila-e-Firdausia*' which is based on the accounts given in *Hiyat-e-Sabaat*',

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authored by Syed Shah Najmuddin Firdausi. The Balkhis celebrate it on the 6th Shawwal.

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BENEFACTION - 1

The Intense Love

O brother, do you know that just as exoterically the observance of *Salaat* (Prayer) and fasting is compulsory, so also esoterically the passionate indulgence in *Ishque* (the intense love of Allah (SWT)) is obligatory. And *Ishque* originates in the pensive state (of the heart). This *Ishque* leads one to the proximity of Allah (SWT). For this reason *Ishque* has been considered obligatory in the way of *Tariquat* (the spiritual way to attain the proximity of Allah (SWT)). *Ishque* is life, and if there is no *Ishque* there is no life; as someone has said:

> Those who are passionately indulgent in the *Ishque* of Allah (SWT) now live in a different state; To them *Islam* is nothing but the *Dæn of Laila*; all the rest are devious ways.

It is said that *Ishque* is like a fire: it burns completely everything it comes across. The heart of Allah (SWT)'s lover is like a hidden fireplace; even a single spark coming out of it can burn both the worlds into ashes. It is said that the Hell fire has been created to punish the whole world of wrong doers, and the fire that resides in the lover's heart has been created to punish the Hell fire. If water from all the rivers are poured on the burning fire of the Lovers' hearts, all water would turn into fire. The commonly-known fire serves as the fuel for the fire of Allah (SWT)'s lovers; this has been nicely said in the following verse:

> One who does not become like a fire in *Ishque*.
> He does not enjoy the pleasure of *Ishque*.

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When, on the Day of Judgment, the lovers would come out of their graves, they would take stock of themselves. And if they would find any shortcoming in the pensive mood of their hearts (i.e. their *Ishque*) they would make such a great hue and cry that even those who would be in Hell would take pity on them. This has been nicely said in a verse:

If this *Ishque* becomes your companion,
this will become your guide for all time to come.

O brother, if possible, get a spark of this *Ishque* right away, so that this attribute you carry in your grave: "The day when wealth and sons avail not (any man) save him who bringeth unto Allah (SWT) a whole heart" - Ash shuarah, verse 88-89.

In my grave, I wish to carry a thread of hair from your lovely hair, so that it provides me the cover on the Day of Judgment.

O brother, the lovers' (of Allah (SWT)) ways are simply amazing, and the doings of the lovers (of Allah (SWT)) are difficult and dreadful. Neither can unmanly man (have the heart to) hear this, nor a eunuch can act on it. For this, one needs Majnoon-like lover (Majnoon is the legendry lover in the *Majnoon-Laila* story) who can bear the disgraceful stoning, or a Farhad (the legendary figure in Farhad-Shireen love story) who is prepared to dig the mountain, or a Zulaikha (the wife of the Egyptian vizir)who was infatuated with the love of Prophet Yousuf (AS).

Go away and have fun, for love is not everybody's game.

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O brother, the day when the leader of the lovers (i.e. Mansoor Hallaj (Rah A)) was put on the gallows, Imam Shibli (Rah A) made a submission to Allah (SWT) and enquired: "How is it that You kill your lovers?" The answer came: "So that he gets the ransom". Then Shibli (Rah A) asked: "What is the ransom?" The answer came: "Vision and My enthralling Beauty"; "I become the ransom for whom I kill". Someone has nicely said:

> Kill your lover for no fault of theirs;
> And then visit their graves.
> O lover, wandering the lanes of the Beloved,
> Be not dismayed, for the Beaty gives hard time only to her lover.

O brother, He does not adorn everybody with the robe of His love, nor is everybody deserving of *Ishque*. Whosoever is deserving of *Ishque*, only he is deserving of Allah (SWT) (i.e. His proximity); whosoever is not deserving of *Ishque* he is not deserving of Allah (SWT)'s proximity. Only those who are engrossed in *Ishque* understand this secret; those who are unaware have no appreciation for this secret. Only those who are engrossed in *Ishque* are aware of its high worth. The rest of the world seeks Paradise, and no one seeks the love of Allah (SWT). The reason is that Paradise is the liking of the low self, while *Ishque* is the food of the soul -- you would find that most people are after money, but you would find none who seeks jewels.

O brother, *Ishque* is such a carrier that it takes you beyond the two worlds in just one jump, taking you in the boundless world:

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If you stand committed to the realm of *Ishque*,
You will find a place in the Book of *Ishque*
If you have a ride on *Ishque*,
Jabrael will follow you at your heels.

O brother, give up your ego, and put yourself at the disposal of *Ishque*. As soon as you put yourself at the disposal of *Ishque*, you will reach your cherished destination. Do you know why there are so many barriers in the way? The purpose is that the *Ashique*'s (lover's) vision becomes increasingly mature, so that he may witness the enthralling Beauty of the Friend without any blinds interposed in-between.

BENEFACTION 2
The Beneficence of Makhdoom's Writings

I am at the river, the waves of which are man-eaters.
Here there is neither a boat nor a boatman;
it is strange!

Ishque is the boat that sails in this river and Allah (SWT) is the boatman. This river is haunted by all kinds of dreadful things. What will you do in this situation? My advice would be that you keep my words as your guide; one would hope that you will get through this dreadful river safely if you study (and take guidance from) my words. Whatever difficulties you face in crossing this river, you would find their solutions in my words, for you have already developed an understanding of their meaning. Study

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them as though you are listening to me in my presence, for pen is one of the two tongues.

Don't worry; you are fortunate, for your daring courage can get you across the river. You will, indeed, succeed. The pearls and jewels found in this river are unique and rare. Those who take a dive in this river must be true lovers, and the most truthful, and dauntless. This is not the job of a lowly person who is given to mean desires, and who is pale-faced, unmanly, and greedy, May Allah (SWT) bless him who said:

> Go away; indulgence in love is not your business.

O brother, study whatever, from my writings, may have reached you, but don't read them casually as though they are fictions.

Someone asked a God-conscious person: "What should one do when he lives in an age when the company of God-conscious people is not available?" He replied: "Read some piece from the writings of God-conscious people, for one uses a lamp for light when the sun sets." Someone has said it in the following words:

> If it has been my misfortune that the sun has set,
> I shall avail the light coming from your radiating face.

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BENEFACTION 3

On the Day of Reckoning Intention would Determine the Worthiness Of One's Deeds.

O brother, *Shariat* (Islamic law) says that, on the Day of Judgment, one would be judged on the merit of his intention. If your heart is dominated by the urge to seek Allah (SWT)'s proximity, you will be treated as belonging to the group of Allah (SWT)'s lovers. Do you know what their reward is? The Prophet (SAW) said : " Indeed, Allah (SWT) has also created a Paradise where there are no *Hoor* and *Qasoor* (the promised lovely creatures that would be in the service of those who are in Paradise), but where our Lord graces with His smiling *Tajalli* (resplendence)". Here one is not concerned with Hell or Paradise.

If your heart is dominated by your passion for Paradise, you will be treated as belonging to the group of pious people; for them, there is the good tiding: "Lo! Those who believe and do good work, there are the Gardens of Paradise for welcome": *Surah Kahaf*, verse 108. If your heart is dominated by worldly desires, you will be grouped with those who are seekers of the world; for them, there is the reprimand: "And a gulf is set between them and that which they desire"-- *Surah Saba*, verse 54. This is the state when one has no choice but to lament on oneself.

Now you look into yourself, and find out what dominates your heart - Allah (SWT)'s love, or love for Paradise, or love for this world. You would be treated accordingly.

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You ought to understand that if your heart is dominated by Allah (SWT)'s love, all barriers would be lifted, and, in the ecstatic vision of the Friend (Allah (SWT)), you would offer your life to Him, of which even the Angel of Death would have no knowledge. As someone has said:

In the passion for Your love, the lovers die,
Of which the Angel of Death has no knowledge.

In this state, it is proclaimed throughout the seven heavens that 'the friend got the Friend'. The seeker found what was sought for, without the need for any go-between. Someone has nicely said:

When the moment for the union comes,
There is no need for the go-between.

If someone is dominated by the love of the Hereafter, the Hereafter would appear before him with all its beauty and splendours, the sight of which will be so enthralling that the seeker would want to die for it, as someone has said:

What you die for in this world, Tomorrow (on the Doomsday) that very thing would present itself before you.

If you seek this world, and its love dominates you, this world, with all its vices, would be presented before you, and the world-seeker would witness its tribulations and give life for it, as someone has said:

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Whatever thoughts occupy your mind in this world,
You will have union with them for ever.

O brother, this being so, you must also understand that the attributes of all the wild and savage animals that inhabit this world are also present in men. Whatever attribute would dominate the man in this world, he would be treated in like manner on Doomsday, that is, he will be raised having the appearance of the animal of similar attribute. For example, if the distinctive attribute of a man in this world is wrath and anger, he will appear as a dog; if one is licentious in this world, he will appear as a pig; if one is overwhelmed by his egoistic pride, he would appear as a lion; if one is cunning, he will appear as a fox; and so on. It is reported in a tradition of the Prophet (SAW) that, on the Doomsday, when Aazar would be taken to Hell, Prophet Ibrahim (AS) would be pained at this sight and would submit to Allah (SWT): "What greater disgrace could it be to me than witnessing my father being taken to Hell while I am standing watching this sight!" The same moment the human guise of Aazar would be changed to that of hondora (an animal) for he was dominated by the attribute of this animal. And then Prophet Ibrahim (AS) would be told: "What relation have you with this animal?" Similarly, the dog of *Ashaab-e-Kahaf* (the people of the cave) will be made to appear as a man, for it had the man's attribute. These examples would tell you that the physical appearance has no significance. But alas! the ignorants look only on the physical appearance.

O brother, many people who appear as men today

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would appear as wild and savage animals on Doomsday. This is the most perilous valley; none but the people with vision seem to be concerned about it.

Listen, don't be complacent. Gradually one should try to get over one's bad attributes, and, Allah (SWT) willing, one would get completely freed from these bad attributes: this would be a great thing.

Indeed, one who wants to know what will happen to him tomorrow, he should take stock of himself right away and see what attribute dominates him. Tomorrow, on the Doomsday, he will be treated accordingly, and this is not difficult to find out.

Similarly, if someone wants to know whether Allah (SWT) is happy with him, he should take stock of himself. If all his deeds are in conformity with Allah (SWT)'s obedience, he should think that he enjoys Allah (SWT)'s pleasure: obedience signifies Allah (SWT)'s pleasure. And if his deeds are partly conforming to obedience and are partly sinful, he would be treated according to the weightage of the good and bad deeds he has done.

Today's life has no permanence. If one could not do what he was supposed to do here, he will have no way to do in the other world. If someone suffers from bad attributes and has not been able to mend his ways, he would retain his bad attributes in him even if he goes to Paradise. Such a person would remain miserable despite all the available bounties of the place, and would remain deprived of the proximity of Allah (SWT). Therefore, mend your ways here, for tomorrow would be too late: what you could not do here, you would not be able to do in the Hereafter. Someone has rightly said:

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Do away with the vices, so that you become one amongst the righteous people;
Be like this, so that you become like those (i.e. righteous people)

BENEFACTION 4
Seeking The Truth

O brother, you ought to understand that nothing is more obligatory for you than seeking the Truth (i.e. Allah (SWT)). Wherever you are - in the market place, at home, in the mosque, or even in the wine-shop - keep focused on your quest for the Truth. Even when the Angel of Death comes to you, you must not be distracted from your indulgence in the vision of the Friend's (i.e. Allah (SWT)'s) Beauty, and tell him to do his job while you are busy doing your's.

It is reported that the Angel *Izrael* came while the Prophet (SAW) was brushing his teeth; the angel asked what he should do - should he return back or do what he has been sent for. The Prophet (SAW) kept on brushing his teeth, and asked the angel to do what he had been instructed to do, while he will keep doing what he had been doing. Even if you are into the Hell fire, there too you must not give up 'seeking Allah (SWT)'. Tell the sentry of Hell that he may keep torturing you, while you would keep going with your quest for the Truth. Then watch what happens. If you enter into Paradise, don't get distracted by its *Hoor* and

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Qusoor (the promised servants in Paradise), rather keep wandering in the lanes of the 'Quest for the Truth (Allah (SWT))', and keep saying:-

> If both the worlds are offered to me but not the union with Him, I would remain a destitute.

O brother, there were many who were engrossed in prayers; many were lost in, and were astounded by the divine secrets; many more were passionately indulgent in doing the given job, yet from the clay was raised the daring being who was ranked above His obedient and ever-praying servants (i.e. angels). This being had no previous records of service, nor was supported by anybody's intercession, yet he was addressed by Allah (SWT): "Am I not your sustainer Lord?"

He, in His Majesty, picks up, in a moment, some gambler and alcoholic, puts him on the heights of good fortune, and makes him engrossed in His vision, and graces him every moment with His beneficence. Every moment, he is rewarded and graced with His proximity and pleasure. On the contrary, when His wrath and indignation are at work, He pulls out somebody engrossed in prayers and obedience, and makes him blinded to the Truth and puts him into disgrace. Then the person becomes doomed. In short, He pulls out somebody from the temple of idol-worship and adorns him with the robe of His honour and His pleasure; while on the other hand, He pulls out somebody from the mosque and disgraces him making him blinded to the Truth. Just as His Benevolences are at work,

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so also are His Wrath and Indignation.

O brother, the road is unsafe and the destination is very far away. This being so, His lover cannot but have a feeling of despair:

As your prey lives on life and heart,
Not everybody can try to be Your lover.

There are many engrossed in prayers and obedience whose prayers and obedience would just be dismissed at the time of death (And We shall turn unto the work they did and make it scattered motes - *Al Furqan* verse 23). And many a hearts who may have to their credit plentiful deeds of obedience may, at the moment of death, find themselves deserted ("and there will appear unto them from their Lord that wherewith they never reckoned" - *Al-Zumer*, verse 47). There are many whose faces are turned away from *Qibla* in their graves; and there are many who are regarded today as faithful friends, who would, in the very first night in the grave, be made strangers. To some, He says, "Sleep (peacefully), just as a newly-wed bride sleeps." And to others, He says: "Sleep, just as the prisoners sleep in the prison." When He disgraces, no obedience and service does him any good, and when He graces, no sin does him any harm. Just imagine, from *Aazar* was born Prophet Ibrahim (AS), the friend of Allah (SWT) (He brings one to life from the dead). And *Kan'an* was born in the house of Prophet Noah (AS) (He causes death to the living). Look at the favours accorded to Prophet Adam (AS): his fault could do him no harm, while Satan was so disgraced that all his

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obedience and prayers were just turned down. Those who have been graced have been given the good tiding ("for them there are glad tidings" - *Al-Zumar*, verse 17); while those who have been disgraced have been reproached ("there will be no good tiding for the guilty - *Al-Furqan*, verse 22). The obedient and graced persons will be identified by the signs (of prostration) in their foreheads "(the mark of them is on their foreheads from traces of prostration" - *Al-Fath*, verse 29); the guilty persons would be identified by their faces ("The guilty will be known by their marks" - *Al-Rahman*, verse 41).

BENEFACTION 5

Restraining From Careless Life and Consciousness about the Hereafter.

O brother, the roads that lead to Him are unsafe. The destination is far away. The body is frail and weak; the heart is helpless, and the time is short. This being so, one does not feel comfortable. It is no time for getting involved in teaching and disputation. It is no occasion for putting on the robe and the turban. Set everything on fire, and lament on yourself and say what this poor man has said:

> I spent all my life in carelessness, I did not do anything; what do I do now?

It is a pity; I spent my life carelessly. The life is nearly ended, but I could not finish the job. The Hereafter is ahead. If I could not do anything in the remaining period of my life, nothing but lamentations would be in my store. Let

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us join in saying what some lover has said:

Where shall I find the remedy for my pain?
The life is coming to an end ; there is nothing
which I should not lament.

In the later part of the night, with the heavy heart of a sinner and a wrong doer, make the following supplication to Allah (SWT):

Do not turn me away dismayed from your door-step.
Instead wash out my sins with the water of your
Beneficence.

Remember, don't be complacent, for the assignment is difficult, and the path is uneven; Satan and your evil self are always after you following you even in the grave. The tribulations of the Hereafter are so severe that even their thoughts are shuddering, and one cries out:

I wish I did not exist, so that I had nothing to do with rest or movement.

Some *Aarif* (a person knowledgeable in the spiritual ways) asked Khwaja Ibrahim Adham (RahA): "I would like you to talk to me about *Tariquat* (the way of spiritualism)". He said: "O brother, I myself have been lamenting on myself since long". The *Aarif* said: "Why was it so? " He replied: "When I was given shape in my mother's womb, the angel asked Allah (SWT) as to whether he should enter my name amongst the graced faithfuls or disgraced revolting persons, and I do not know what the answer was.

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Similarly, I do not know when the Angel of Death would also ask Allah (SWT) the same question at the time of death, what the answer would be. And again when on the Doomsday, the angel would ask Allah (SWT) where should he take me - to Paradise or Hell - I don't know what the answer would be".

O brother, everybody following the path of *Dæn* (Islamic way of life) - be he a self-restraining pious person, or one engrossed in prayers, or a highly knowledgeable person in matters of *Deen* - is anxiously worried by the thought that He (Allah (SWT)) could not care less about anything: "Allah (SWT) is altogether indifferent about (His) creatures" - *Al-Ankabot*, verse 6. And all *Siddiques* (truthful persons) are very much afraid that they would be questioned about their truthfulness. There are good many Allah (SWT)'s obedient servants who have to their credit the wealth of prayers and pious deeds, yet (they are afraid that) these may not be of any value at the time of death ("That He may ask the loyal of their loyalty" - *Al-Ahzab*, verse 8), Sometimes we see that the Teacher of the Angels (Satan) was stripped of the angelic robe, despite his prayers and obedience that he had put in for seven hundred thousand years ("for Lo! Thou are outcast" - *Saad*, verse 78). We also see that *Balam Baaoor* was taken out of the mosque and put in the company of dogs despite the fact that he was unique and had been adorned with the robe of *Isme-e-Aazam* (the Beautiful names of Allah (SWT)): ("His likeness is as the likeness of a dog; if thou attackest him he panteth with his tongue out" - *Al-Araf* verse, 176).
Someone has nicely said:

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To His attitude of indifference, your belief and disbelief do not matter;

Before His silence, your scepticism and faith are of no consequence.

O brother, in this world, there is no comfort, and no rejoicing. It is reported that one day our Prophet (SAW) asked Angel *Jabrael:* "How are you doing these days?" *Jabrael* replied: "O Prophet (SAW), ever since one amongst us has been disgraced and outlawed, nobody is at ease."

Now you may understand what we unfortunate people should do. While there is still time, always remain concerned about yourself, and, once in a while, take pity on yourself and lament your being. You should not give up, nor should you lose hope. If you cannot attain the unflinching faith of the stalwarts of this path, try to attain the lower level of faith - that of a woman or an eunuch. What else can be done if the sun is not available excepting using the lamp. Someone has rightly said:

If it has been my misfortune that the sun has set, I shall benefit from the light of your shining face.

If we cannot do even this much, would we be any better than Pharoah, Namrood, a star-worshipper or a Jew? O brother, today those who pass away keeping safe their faith are the stalwarts of the *Deen*; they are the Shibli and Junaid of the time. The rest is all wishful thinking:

Don't take pride in your faith while you are still not laid to rest in the grave;

If you carry your faith safe in the grave, this is the

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great miracle.

O brother, follow the leaders of the *Deen*, and keep yourself safe from the distractions of *Satan*, so that you are not trapped by *Satan*. If at all this happens, get back at the earliest. While the matter has not gone out of control, always keep yourself alert and keep pitying yourself, for the door of Allah (SWT)'s forgiveness is still open.

O old sinner, the door of forgiveness is still open,
And the bounties are set to welcome you;
Hurry up and seek Allah (SWT)'s forgiveness;
Don't waste time, for in this world one witnesses
new events every moment.

BENEFACTION 6
Seeking Allah's Forgiveness

O brother, to keep safe from sins, from birth to death, is the angelic attribute, and to be given to sins all the time is the Satanic trait, but to sin and then seek forgiveness is the trait of Adam (AS) and his progenies. A man is not held accountable simply because he has committed a sin; he is rather held guilty for not seeking forgiveness for the committed sins; he is rather charged with not seeking forgiveness for the committed sins. Don't you know that there is a consensus amongst all people on the view that man is not held accountable simply because he has committed a sin, for the verdict is: "A person who has sought forgiveness for the committed sin is like one who has not committed the sin". That a man commits a sin

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should not surprise anyone.

O brother, a man is given to licentious passions and low desires: the *Satan* is following him around, and his low self is seated within his self.

O brother, in whatever state you may be, and whatever you may be doing, do not be unmindful of seeking Allah (SWT)'s forgiveness. Allah (SWT)'s works are much holier than the obedience of the faithfuls, and they are more sacred than the sins of the sinners. He does what He wants. His actions are not governed by any cause-and-effect principle. For this reason, the elders of the *Deen* have said: "Allah (SWT)'s blessings are what come as His beneficence; it has nothing to do either with someone's deeds or his personal self." If deeds were the criteria, the earlier *Ummah* (followers of Prophets) would have an advantage over our Prophet's (SAW) *Ummah*; for the people of earlier *Ummah* had much longer life-span --- hundreds of years--- while our Prophet's *Ummah* has much shorter life span --- some sixty to seventy years. Yet we find that our Prophet's (SAW) *Ummah* is much more blessed than the earlier *Ummah*; similarly, if personal self counted, *Satan* would have been given preference over Adam (AS), for *Satan* was created out of luminous fire while Adam(AS) was created out of clay. Thus it is established that the favours of Allah (SWT)'s blessings happen without rhyme or reason: it depends neither on the beneficiary's deeds nor on his personal self. Now returning back to the subject of 'seeking forgiveness', we know that the greatest leader of the Prophets and of Allah (SWT)'s friends used to seek Allah (SWT)'s forgiveness seventy times in a day, and when the

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Quranic verse ' Ask forgiveness of they sins' -*Al Mumin*, verse 55 was revealed, he increased the count to hundred times. In this there is an example for those who are great devotees: those who are more obedient and pious must not be unmindful of seeking forgiveness even for a moment, for one becomes doomed not because of committing sins but because of not seeking forgiveness. Ponder on the story of Adam (AS) and the *Satan*, and recall how Adam (AS), after committing the fault, stood up and started reciting:

"My Lord, I have done wrong to myself: I seek your forgiveness; have mercy on me". On the other hand, *Satan* remained obstinate showing no sign of repentance for his sin, and so he was doomed for ever (On the Day of Judgment, he would remain cursed).

O brother, one should abstain from committing sin, and if he commits the sin, he should give it up at the earliest just as Adam (AS) did, and seek forgiveness in the words of Adam (AS). One should not insist on the sin, for this leads to *Kufr* (disbelief), as happened with *Qabeel* (Adam (AS)'s son who killed his brother) who ended up in *Kufr*. May Allah (SWT) forbid! For this reason, one should, after committing sin, immediately repent and seek forgiveness, and recite Adam's (AS) words of repentance. One should refrain from insisting on his sins just as he tries to keep safe from *Kufr*, for the insistence on sin is just what makes one doomed. The *Shariat* (Islamic jurisprudence) says : "The insistence on a minor sin makes it a major sin, while even a major sin is condoned if one seeks forgiveness".

O brother, the death is lurking around, and the time

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is short. If the Angel of Death suddenly appears, what would you do? As the job is still incomplete, and you are still not freed from sin, so never be forgetful about 'seeking forgiveness' (and repose hope on His mercy). The redeeming fact is that you are not as much immersed in sins as the magicians of Pharoah's court, nor are you any more unclean than the dog of *Ashab-e-Kahaf* (the people of the cave), nor are you as still as the Mount of *Sinai*, nor are you as valueless as *Chob-e-Hamana* (the crying wood of the Prophet (SAW)'s mosque). If someone brings a slave from Abysinia and calls him *Kafoor* (camphor), what business you and I have to question him.

O brother, when the angels complained to Allah (SWT) that they had no patience for the trouble-makers, do you know what the reply was. The voice said: "Indeed, if ever I send them to your door-step, ask them to go back, and if I sell them to you, do not purchase them. Are you afraid that their sins would sully the heights of My Holiness! Listen, these beings made of clay are welcome in My Majesty's court, and once I have graced them, what can sins and blemishes do them any harm",

> I was bad from top to bottom, and yet you bought me;
> Hey, look at the sullied goods, and the way it has been purchased!

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BENEFACTION 7

Tajreed & Tafreed

O brother, you ought to know that *Tajreed* and *Tafreed* are the basic requirements for following this path (the path of *Tariquat*). To cut off oneself from all associations and all people and things is *Tajreed*, and to get out of one's own self in *Tafreed*. This requires that one should have no feeling of distaste for anybody, nor should he have obligations to anyone, nor he be known to be amongst men of renown, nor have great many desires seated in his heart, nor have any business with people. Also, his courage should be touching the heights of *Arsh* (the seat of Allah (SWT)'s Majesty); he should have aversion to both the worlds; he should love to be always in the company of his Beloved. If he is offered both the worlds but denied the union with the Beloved, he would feel the least happy, and if he gets the proximity of his Beloved, but denied the world, he would feel the least sorry. Some elderly (of the *Deen*) has said: "There is no feeling of discomfort and wilderness in the company of Allah (SWT), and there is little comfort in the company of those who are other than Allah (SWT)", Some body has nicely said:

> In your company the heart feels like a mosque, and
> without you the heart becomes a fireplace of the
> fire-worshippers;
> Without you the heart is like Hell, and with you it is
> Paradise.

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O brother, one can do without everything excepting Allah (SWT), but one cannot, under any circumstances, do without Allah (SWT). Remember what Prophet Musa (AS) was told: "I am a must for you", meaning thereby that one can live without all things but not without Allah (SWT). When a *Salik* (the seeker of Allah (SWT)) attains this state, he discards all laurels of his attainments. To him 'you' and 'I' make no difference: He becomes indifferent to life and death, to dismissals or approvals, to praise or reproof. He is not concerned with Paradise or Hell; he is the least bothered about this world or the Hereafter; he does not depend on any person for his food and clothing. He is courageous, and takes a dive in the great sea and is rewarded with the shining jewels that glitter in the night. Can such a person be keen about having the smoking lamp of the old woman! His objective is to attain the proximity of Allah (SWT). He does not seek anything other than Allah (SWT). He always is on the forward march. He cares little for name and fame, and safety. From his within comes the voice: "Even if *Arsh* comes in my way I shall destroy it. And if the world and the Hereafter come in my way I shall trample them down". The only thing that comforts him is his constant indulgence in the quest of Allah (SWT) - that he keeps on visiting the Mount of Sinai of his quest, and keeps seeking Allah (SWT)'s vision as Musa (AS) did, and enjoys bashfully the divine re-joinder: "you can't have My vision". Praiseworthy is this devotion, and the passionate devotion of this creature made of clay. When a true disciple gets accomplished in *Tajreed* and *Tafreed*, then he is acclaimed in the world in such words as: "O Dawood (AS),

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when you meet My seeker, become his servant". When a Prophet of the stature of Dawood (AS) is asked to become the servant of the seeker, where do others stand!

Divine ways are beyond one's comprehension. These are based on His Will and Wisdom. He does what He wants: (Just imagine) in the idolatrous place of Aazar was born Prophet Ibrahim (AS), and from the idol house of Kaaba emerged our Prophet Muhammad (SAW). In short, His Will and Wisdom are at work in whatever takes place (in the universe). The disciple understands this gradually, and attains this elevated position step by step, by the grace of Allah (SWT).

O brother, whatever comes to you in the path of the *Deen*, be it a thorn, take hold of it: if you let it go, this very thorn would pierce your heart like an arrow. Did you not see that when Prophet Musa (AS) was honoured to have a talk with Allah (SWT) (and Allah (SWT) spoke directly unto Moses" --*Al-Nisa*, verse 164), and one hundred and twenty four thousand and fourteen words instructions were revealed to him, his whole body became all ears - all parts of the body were given the ability to hear just as ears do. With every word revealed to him, he went into trance, and it appeared as though there was no life in him. And when he would return to his normal state, he would remember the scolding words: "O Musa, how come you killed *Qibti* without My permission!" These words would be much more torturous to him than what it would be if he were made to visualize the scene of the combined tribulations of all the seven Hells. Despite all the beneficence he was graced with

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by Allah (SWT), this was the thorny thought that always vexed him.

O brother, live like a man, and eat what men eat. In the eyes of the lovers, the vast ocean appears like a small ditch of water and the mountain appears as a straw. To him, (the Beloved's) love or ill treatment, approval or disapproval, are all the same, and this is distinctive of the truthful lover. It has been said that the great truthful lover (allegorically speaking for Adam (AS)) flew from his home of reverence, reached Arsh where he witnessed the glory of greatness; he left it and reached *Kursi* (the Chair) where he found the vast expanse; he left it as well and reached the heavens, where he witnessed the soaring heights; he left it, and came down to the Earth, and here he witnessed toil and labour - (he liked it) and he came down. The Urdu equivalents for 'love' and 'labour' differ only in the placement of a dot, and the significance of this difference is known only to those who are really knowledgeable, of which others have little clue.

In *Lauh-e-Mahfooz* (the Board containing the divine decree for the working of His creation), the first word that appeared was 'love'. With slight change in the script, 'love' turned into' labour'. This is why the elders (of the *Deen*) have said that 'love' entails great tribulation, and life-killing poisonous drinks. Those who are His friends (i.e. Allah (SWT)'s lovers) are always willing to die, but to them the message is: "O ye who believe! Endure, outdo all others in endurance, be ready, and observe your duty to Allah (SWT), in order that ye may succeed" - *Al- Imran*, Verse 200.

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BENEFACTION 8

Man the Exalted Being

O brother, you ought to understand that human beings are the summum bonum of all the creations. The humans possess everything that is of any worth, the rest is all delusion, so don't remain complacent. You will find in this being, made of clay and water, what you will not find anywhere in the eighteen thousand worlds. Allah (SWT) says: "And breathed into him of My Spirit" -- *Saad*, verse 73. On the contrary, just imagine what was said about the angels, despite the fact that they were placed in the hallowed position of cleanliness and holiness; for them, it was simply said: "they are honourable servants."-*Al-Ambiya*, verse 26. But love is a different matter; only human beings were privileged with this honour; Quran says: "whom He loveth and who love Him" - *Maida*, verse 54. As someone has said:

> When the clay was favoured by the proximity of Allah (SWT), *Arsh* also bowed down before Adam.

O brother, when the Great Creator (i.e. Allah (SWT)), in the grace of His Power, blessed Adam, made of clay, with His proximity, He kept him in His presence, on-looking him for forty years, during which time he (Adam AS) lost the wetness of his life. Then the angels were ordered to visit him and caress him and his doorstep, which was loftier than the seven heavens in grandeur and magnificence ("then fall down before him prostrate" - *Saad*,

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verse 72). What would you say: 'was this honour being accorded to the clay'? No, this was for the heart which was the seat of the secrets of Allah (SWT) and was itself one of the secrets of Allah (SWT.) The underlying meaning of the Quranic verse "say the soul is my Sustainer's *Amr* (Order)" was imprinted on Adam's heart. This was made manifest by the words of the Prophet (SAW): "Adam was created in His image". Let this also be understood that this was not said by way of an example or as a simile; this was rather a great secret. When the highly-placed angels witnessed the beauty, greatness, and honours (of Adam), they started making the offering of their souls at the doorstep of this daring clay-made creature (i.e. Adam (AS)). But indeed, when the damned *Satan* faced the rising sun of Adam's fortune, his eyes started blinking, and he could not see even a speck of the invaluable possessions of Adam (AS).

Adam (AS)'s person was the trustee of Allah (SWT)'s secrets, otherwise this handful clay (Adam) had nothing in itself that should have been deserving of the great respects given by angels (the beings living in the realm of holiness, and those who spoke from the pulpits of affection) who lay prostrate before him. How could it be that the ever-obedient Jibrael and Michael would have been asked to lay prostrate! It was that hidden seat of Allah (SWT)'s manifestation-the heart - which made the handful clay, i.e. Adam, adorned in the robe before which the angels prostrated. All intellectuals of the world are wonder-struck why this handful clay was blessed to become so dear to Allah (SWT). Some elderly of the *Deen* has rightly said: "I swear by Allah (SWT), He does not befriend anybody but

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Himself. Don't you see that one who loves his creation loves himself".

It has been reported that when Adam (AS) went to Paradise, the *Shariah* (Islamic jurisprudence) demanded that he should not go close to the (forbidden) tree ("but come not nigh this tree" - *Al Baqara*, verse 35). The *Tariquat* (the way leading to Allah (SWT)) advised: "you all come down from paradise. (Go down, all of you, from hence" - *Al Baqra*, verse 38). Here Adam (AS) thought that Paradise was a lovely place; here was an environment where one lived like a leader and a master. He thought that he should go to the Earth, for he had no taste for leadership. At this point, a voice from the unseen said: "Adam, do you want to go travelling?" He said: "Yes indeed, I have to take this course." The voice said: "Well, get down to work". Adam (AS) said: "This work cannot be done here, for here there are angels, the keepers and servants, and a life of authority and leadership". Then the voice said: "Be ready, you will have to get this place of peace changed for the place of tribulation. You will have to go to the house of reproach and trouble, leaving behind this house of peace and safety. You will have to give up the crown of authority and put on the tarnished headgear of wretchedness. You will have to be prepared for repentance (and for being reproached) from your present position of honour ("And Adam disobeyed his Lord" - *Taha*, verse 121)." Adam said: "I am ready for all these". Then the voice said:" If you are ready, I also do not mind." Evidently, Adam (AS) did not care for his *Khilafat*. For this reason, it would be proper to say that Paradise was deprived of Adam (AS) rather than Adam (AS) was

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deprived of Paradise. If a crying heart cannot enjoy the dish of a roasted food, how can the lover with blazing heart care for the Paradise's *Hoors*, (lovely dames) and palaces!

Don't treat this being, made of clay and water, with disdain. Everything belongs to this being, the rest is all delusion. The respected men of *Tariquat* have said that if all the treasures of wealth and good fortune were offered to this being, it would not have been better off compared to what it has been by its coming to this world of tribulation as a result of the divine words: " and Adam disobeyed his Lord" - *Taha*, verse 121. Had not this world appeared enticing to the innocence of Adam (AS), there would have been created a problem and this was unacceptable in the realm of "there is none to be worshipped except Allah (SWT)". For the unique creature, i.e. Adam (AS), who was created by Allah (SWT)'s own hand (i.e. Allah (SWT)'s own person), Allah (SWT)'s words "Adam disobeyed his Lord", crowned him with the robe of honours. In the Paradise, all the nature's bounties had immense love for Adam (AS) - they loved him for they had not seen such an amazing work of nature. They all held Adam in love, but the spirited Adam (AS) had nothing to do with them. Adam (AS) was keen to live as an obedient servant: this was not possible in the Paradise, for Paradise was a place where one lived in glory; here there was no opportunity for carrying out orders. So Adam (AS) made a submission to Allah (SWT) that he needed some excuse for getting out from Paradise and its bounties. This was it, and the wheat plant provided the required excuse. And it was proclaimed that "Adam disobeyed his Lord". After this proclamation, everything

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distanced itself from him (Adam).

O brother, we must not talk about Adam without following Adam (AS)'s ways. Adam (AS)'s concern was the *Deen*, so he gave up his home of safety and preferred to live in the house of repentance (i.e. this world where one sins and seeks Allah (SWT)'s forgiveness).

When the voice said: "O Adam, think dispassionately; be ready to face the animosity of *Satan*. You will have to give up your exalted position, and adopt a life where you may commit sins. In place of *Khilafat*, you will have to put on the headgear of obedience (and bear the scolding of reproach). To these Adam responded: "yes, I am ready, but let not these tribulations cause my downfall (i.e. your disfavour)". Thus Adam got out of Paradise, disowning all its bounties.

O brother, if the piety of all pious people and the selflessness of all innocent persons are ingrained in your nature, don't be captivated by them. And if the swords of indignation, with their attendant dismay and sorrow, are drawn over your head, don't give in.

O brother, as things are, even angels Jabrael and Michael have no clue about His kingdom: where do we stand then! Adam (AS) was honoured with Prophet-hood and the angels were ordered to fall prostate before him. Paradise was placed at his disposal, and then suddenly he was turned out naked from Paradise and it was proclaimed in all the world that "Adam disobeyed his Lord, so went

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astray" *Taha*, verse 121. For this reason, it is said that the very day he (Adam) was made to enter Paradise with the full ceremony that goes with regal authority, he was turned out naked from Paradise.

O brother, if our ancestor Adam (AS), who was favoured with an abode in the Paradise and was all-obedience and was adorned in the robe of *Khilafat*, could not have even a moment of trouble-free life and could not do without putting in hard work, how can it be that we, who are his progenies, who have been passing through testing times and are all-sins, deserving Allah (SWT)'s displeasure and punishment, can live without doing hard work and without facing tribulations. Obviously, this is impossible. O brother, when we were in the mother's womb, our food was nothing but blood; such a blood-thirsty being has no feeling for respite or happiness. Now look at the prayers of our Prophet (SAW)- the leader of the Prophets and the king of *Aulias* (Allah (SWT)'s friends) - he used to pray in these words: " I wish my Lord had not created me". And the great Abu Bakr, who was the highly blessed person, only next to the Prophet, used to wail and say: "I wish I was the leaves of a tree which the goats would have eaten". And the exalted personality whom the Prophet (SAW) eulogized in these words: "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its entrances", used to wail and say: " I wish I was not born". O brother, when such has been the state of the stalwarts of the *Deen*, will it make any sense for us to aspire for attaining our objective and seek happiness? The situations we are faced with, and the things we are concerned with, are such that even the mountains

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and the earth and the heavens cannot withstand their stresses. Under the circumstances, in whatever state you may be, you should raise your hands to make prayers, and you should say:

> O Lord, the sustainer of the world, I am down-trodden and helpless,
> Drenched in blood, my boat is sailing in dry land;
> I am left alone on the way, And have none to keep me company; I am completely forlorn.

O brother, the world we live in today is a place of immense tribulations, and the practising of *Shariah*'s Do's and Don't's has its own difficulties. *Satan* and one's own lowly self are lurking around. Under the circumstances, one would be surprised if he finds someone who keeps himself safe from committing sins.

One day when Adam (AS) met *Satan*, he asked him: "O damned person, (do you realize) what you did to me!" He (*Satan*) said: "O Adam, you blame me for what happened to you. Would you tell me whom should I blame for what happened to me ". Somebody has nicely said:

> The hunter of eternity put bait in the net. A fowl fell its prey - his name was Adam;
> Whatever good or bad happens in this world is his own doing, but he blames others.

O brother, why blame the *Satan* or the lowly self-they have no real power. The truth of the matter is that we are simply like the ball facing the bat. This being so, there is nothing that we can do. Allah (SWT) does what He wills ;

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what He wills He orders it to happen (He does what He wants - Ibrahim, verse 27; He orders what He wills - *Al-Maida*, verse 120).

BENEFACTION 9
The Real Significance of Repentance and the Indifference of Allah

O brother, the first thing to take care of is that one should make sure that his body, clothings, and food are clean and *Halal* (in conformity with Shariah). Secondly, one should keep his five senses away from committing sins and disobedience, and thirdly, he should clean up his heart by shunning all bad habits, such as, niggardliness, malice, jealousy, etc. If the disciple attains the first level of cleanliness, he has taken the first step in the way of the *Deen*. After attaining the second level of cleanliness, he takes the second step, and with the third level, he takes the third step. At this stage, the disciple becomes aware of the real significance of repentance and "seeking forgiveness", and he really becomes a repentant person. This state is known as "*Gardish*", a word which stands for 'entering from the state of un-cleanliness state to that of cleanliness'. Now the disciple is said to have undergone a radical change: if he was a church he has become a mosque; if he was an idol-place, he has become a place of obedience (to Allah (SWT)). In this state, the rising sun of *Iman* (faith) dawns on the heart of the disciple; Islam shows up with its splendour, and the door to the knowledge of Allah (SWT) opens up.

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Let it be reiterated: without cleanliness (as detailed out above) all will come to naught whatsoever may be one's state and no matter how much hard work he may have put in prayers and Allah (SWT)'s obedience, Someone has said:

> When all bad habits got transformed into good habits, All problems got resolved.

Only after one seeks Allah (SWT)'s forgiveness, the sun of *Iman* (belief in Allah (SWT)) will show up. On the horizon of one's heart, the sun of belief will appear with as much brilliance as will be commensurate with the level of one's repentance. Thus we see that the most important thing is to accomplish the most truthful state of repentance. This is described in the following verse:

> O aged sinner, the door of repentance is still open,
> And abounding Allah (SWT)'s blessings are set to welcome you,
> Hurry up and seek repentance, for if you are late,
> The world would in this period witness many a changes.

Listen, Allah (SWT) is great; He does what He wants. When He wants, He picks up a person from the idolatrous place and makes him His worshipper, and while the warmth of the prostrating signs on his forehead is still not gone, he is carried to a place where even the angels don't find their way. And He blesses him with such attributes which cannot be attained by other people, the angels, and the Jinns. They

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(the people, the angels, and the Jinns) would try to keep track of the blessed person, and would not have a clue, and they would simply marvel at the transformation that took place in the blessed man. Then the Creator (Allah (SWT)) would say: "I did what I wanted. Who dare question Me? My actions are not constrained by the cause-and-effect principles. Some I grace as Ba-Yezid, while others I disgrace as Abu Jahal. There are some whom I grace with the highest place in Paradise, while there are others whom I put in the deepest pit of Hell. Don't ask Me why. Such questions are asked only in the world of human beings." Someone has nicely said :

The dread of this path makes things difficult;
Its fright has wrecked the hearts of many people;
This despair caused life to many a Siddiques,
And the heaven blows the dust off the wrong doings.

O brother, neither can somebody's belief (in the Unity of Allah (SWT)) and obedience add to His (Allah (SWT)s) Beauty and splendour, nor can somebody's disbelief (infidelity) and sin cause Him any harm. If the whole world becomes *Khana-e-Kaba* and all human beings and Jinns become Abu Bakr Siddique, He does not care. Similarly, if the whole world becomes an idol- house and all humans and Jinns become Pharoahs, He would careless. Somebody has nicely said:

He, who is indifferent, has no concern with
somebody's belief or disbelief;
As for His silence, people are in suspense.
He is benefited neither by Isa nor by Musa, neither
Pharoah nor Namrood can cause Him any harm.

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BENEFACTION 10

The Way of Tasawwuf

O brother, you should know that the first *Sufi* (Muslim spiritualist) on this earth was Adam (AS). Allah (SWT) created him with clay and made him exalted. He graced him with *Khilafat* (the viceroy-ship). First he was made to sit in meditation in isolation for forty days in Makkah and Taef. For this reason, a disciple is instructed to sit in *Arbaeen* (forty days' sitting in meditation) immediately after becominga *mureed*, (disciple). When he (Adam) completed the *Arbaeen* of *Tajrid*, he was given the beneficence of the soul. When He (Allah (SWT)) kindled the lamp of intelligence in his heart, the light of wisdom emanated from his heart and found its expression through his tongue. At that point of time, he (Adam) got up and started moving towards Paradise - he had already by then been honoured with *Khilafat*, and the angels had already prostrated before him. He was ordered that he should control himself and should not follow his personal will in his actions, for a disciple is not free to follow his own will. Adam (AS) became spirited, and started to exercise his free will in ecstasy. Then from the watchful invisible world came the reproach : "Adam disobeyed his Lord". Then Adam became repentant and started seeking forgiveness: "Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, surely we are of lost!"

This is the basis of the *Sufia*'s (those who practise Islamic spiritualism) tradition of 'seeking forgiveness'. (As a result)

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all privileges associated with leadership and *Khilafat* was withdrawn, and he was stripped of his body cover. Now he devoted himself exclusively to seeking forgiveness. Then he was asked to go to the Earth, for a disciple is required to go travelling if he commits a wrong. Therefore, he decided to travel all alone and naked. As he was naked, he was asked to seek help. He asked the trees to provide him some leaves to cover himself with. Thus he got three leaves with which he made his robe, and, covering himself with this robe, he set off for travelling to this Earth. For three hundred years, he wept and lamented. When he was absolved of the wrong he had done, he was given the good tiding that he had become honoured. Now Adam (AS) had become a *Sufi*. The robe that he had made with the leaves was his favourite dress. He kept it very dear to him, and, in the last days of his life he passed it on to Shees (AS) and adorned him with the *Khilafat*. Since then it has become the practice (that the Sufis pass on their Khilafat and robe to their disciples). *Tasawuf* became the way of life of the Prophets. During their travels in the sufi's ways, the sufi's require a place to sit down together for conferring with each other. For this purpose, *Kaaba* was brought to existence-*Kaaba* is the first *Khanquah* (the gathering place of sufis) established by Adam (AS); prior to this, no *Khanquah* existed.

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BENEFACTION 11

The Accomplished Spiritual Mentor & Devoted Disciple

O brother, you should know that the disciple should be like Abu Bakr (RA), and the *peer* (the spiritual guide) should be like Prophet Muhammad (SAW), for a Prophet's tradition says: "What descended on my heart, I made it descend on Abu Bakr's heart". What a nice way of benefaction it is, from one's heart to other's heart about which the ears and tongues remain unaware ! How exalted is the *peer* (spiritual mentor) and how exalted is the *mureed* (the disciple)! The world would never again witness such a *peer* and such a *mureed*. This is what is meant by the maxim that the *mureed* should be a devotee of his *peer*. If your way of life is not in conformity with the commands of your spiritual mentor, you are the disciple of your own wishes - and not of your spiritual mentor. Somebody has nicely said:

Put yourself entirely at the disposal of a guide,
So that he gets you rid of your desires and objectives.

There is a consensus amongst the *sufia* (Muslim spiritualists) on the verdict that the disciple who obeys his *peer* in violations of *Shariah* laws is considered to be the disciple of his *peer*, and the disciple who does not obey his spiritual mentor in matters that appear contradictory to *Shariah*'s laws is a disciple of his *Deen* and not of his spiritual

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mentor. This is why someone has said:

Whatever the spiritual mentor says, take it as the absolute secret,
And whatever the spiritual mentor does, take it as divinely ordained.

The patient is not allowed to act against the advice of his physician; he is not supposed to ask his physician as to what medicine he should prescribe and what he should or should not eat. If the patient thinks that he himself is knowledgeable enough in the science of medicine, why he should come to the physician. Taking the lead from this example, the disciple-mentor relationship should be understood as follows: if the disciple does not think that his spiritual mentor is able to serve as a guide, it would mean that the mentor himself is still a patient and needs a physician to treat his disease, and he has no right to act as a physician. It is, therefore, obvious that the trouble we find in the disciple - mentor relationship is due to the fact that the disciple is unaware of what it means to be a disciple, neither does the spiritual mentor know what is required of the mentor. People are generally unaware of this fact, and are just following rituals, and have gone astray. In such a situation, they stand simply doomed. Someone has said:

The cup has nothing except the flies;
There is nothing in the caravan excepting the ringing bell.

If the disciple takes a critical view of his spiritual mentor, why at all should he be his disciple; he should

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himself become a mentor. If ever it were possible to weigh a mountain with the weighing scale of a shop-keeper then, indeed, it might be possible to assess the mentor's actions with the faulty scale of his (disciple's) mind. Just as the former is impossible, so also is the latter impossible. Such thoughts hardly occur in the mind of a dutiful and well-groomed disciple. In short, if a disciple is ordered to act on what may appear to be against *Shariat*'s laws, he should obey his mentor(without hesitation). Someone has nicely said:

> Whatever the spiritual mentor says, take it as the absolute secre,
> And whatever the spiritual mentor does, take it as divinely ordained.

Don't enter into discussion with an ignorant or a disbeliever; don't answer his criticisms, for these matters are beyond him and his thoughts. He has not heard these things in his life. If he hears these things, he would cry out: "this is an ancient lie" - *Al-Ahqaf*, verse 11. Ignoring all the tumult of disputation, Hazrat Ain-ul-Quzzaat has said the following :

> You are not my fellow traveller, go your own way and be happy;
> May you live in safety, and leave me by myself.

O brother, being a true disciple calls for complete subservience to the spiritual mentor. Do you know what *Iradat* is: this is giving up one's desires, plans, and

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objectives? To explain further, it demands that one should give up his desires just as the serpent discards its outer skin, and he should become like a dead in the hands of the person who gives bath to the dead. . If the disciple has even an iota of reservation about the capability of his spiritual mentor, he is a self-conceited person and not a devotee of his mentor. For this reason, it has been said that the disciple should be a devotee of his mentor so that he becomes a true devotee of Allah (SWT): "whoso obeyeth the messenger obeyeth Allah (SWT)" - *Al-Nisa*, verse 80.

O brother, the Prophets are like physicians, and the people are like patients, and the holy Quran is the treasury of medicines. Allah (SWT) says: "And we reveal of the Quran that which everything is a healing" - *Bani Iasrail*, verse 82. As it is, the medicine is prescribed according to the disease, and, for every disease, specific drug is prescribed which helps cure the disease of the patient. The patient (allegorically standing for the disciple) is thus saved from doom, and the *Dæn* appears in all its splendour. The people belonging to this group (i.e. the group of *sufia*) are the real heirs of the Prophets; for them the advice is that they should talk to people according to the level of their understanding. Therefore, these people talk to people according to their level of understanding, and they treat the disease of each individual accordingly. O brother, have complete faith in whatever the mentor may say or do as his prerogatives and believe in them as though they are divine revelations. If you have even an iota of reservations in this regard, let this be known that you are a disbeliever and not a disciple. A disciple once said to his spiritual mentor that

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he had a dream in which the mentor said something to him and he (the disciple) asked why it was so. Having heard this, the mentor turned his face away from him and said that he (disciple) must have had some reservations about him in his normal state when he was awake, and that must be why he asked the question 'Why' in his dream. The essence of this is described in the verse:

He could not become the moon unless he had seen the sun;
One could not become a king unless he had been a servant.

If the spiritual mentor says that it is night while the sun may be shining before you, you should think that the mentor must be right and that your eye-sight must have erred and was at fault. Do you realize that it is not easy to become a disciple. There are, indeed, very many ways leading to Allah (SWT), but this way is unique and the most lovely.

BENEFACTION 12
The Truth about this World

O brother, you ought to know that this world is untrustworthy and highly deceitful. It is always changing its state. On the face of it, its appears as sweet as honey, but in reality it is poisonous. If it greets somebody in the morning, the very evening it forsakes him. If it honours somebody in

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the morning, the very evening it tramples him down. Its cup is filled with straw and trash, and it is covered with humming flies: someone has said:

> Don't drink from this cup, for it is filled with poison,
> Don't smell the fragrance of its flowers and leaves, for
> there are thorns underneath them.

This old lady (i.e. the world) never spares the lives of ferocious kings, nor does it forget to destroy its lovers. If ever it gives something to somebody it also takes it back. This world is a sorceress. Its sorcery appears as bedecked as a dreamland; its food and apparel are imaginary; all its pleasures and infatuations are like wet dreams. Yet people run after it crazily and stray about for it.

In this world, it is impossible to find happiness without mourning, pleasure without sorrow, life without death, health without illness, attainments without pains, wealth without hardship, food without problems. People are aware of all these, yet they have been running after it, unconcerned about the impending troubles and tribulations. May Allah bless him who said:

> I asked a wise man what was the truth about this world;
> He said that it was either a dream, or a spell of wind,
> or a legend;
> I then asked him about the person who had fallen
> in love with this world,
> He said: such a person is either a devil, or a demon,
> or insane.

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O brother, the elders have said that there is no happy thing in this world which does not have the underlying cause for sorrow, for there does not exist any happiness without sorrow, nor any merry-making without mourning. It is said that Prophet Isa (AS) saw an old woman who appeared to be in bad plight: her face was black, and she looked ugly. He (Isa) asked her who she was. She replied that her name was 'the world'. Then he asked: "Tell me how many had you for your husband" She said: "Very many: it is impossible to know their numbers". Isa (AS) asked: "How many amongst them divorced you?" She replied: "None divorced me. Indeed, I killed them all. They all died, and I am still alive".

O brother, if this world had been of any value, or had any virtue, or was faithful, the people of vision and understanding would have never ignored it. Had they not forsaken it, it would have never reached us. The Prophets and *Aulia* Allah (Allah's friends), who have been the most accomplished persons in this world, would not have dismissed it as of no consequence.

O brother, this world is the sea of tribulations - the sea which is full of blood. It is the beloved which is nothing but a trouble-maker. It is the beloved which possesses nothing. Its happiness, as well as its killings, are strange. It does not disclose its trouble-making nature. It is such a beauty that it keeps its face covered. Its gait is like that of an intoxicated person, and its heart is devoid of love and sympathy. It lures everybody, but would not let anyone get

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close. If it offers something in the morning, it takes it back in the evening. If it honours someone in the morning, it insults him in the evening. This aged bride has been very good at killing many of the young persons and kings, and causing ruination to many of its lovers. Despite all these evils, people get trapped in its deceit and deception. It is nothing but evil. However, there is one good thing about it : it is the tillage of the Hereafter; one can sow the seed here and harvest in the Hereafter. Amongst the evils of the world, the mildest is that it behaves like an unfaithful husband who follows every other woman endearingly, or like a licentious woman who keeps people surrounding her. If this world gives something to somebody, it takes it back. It has enticing eyes and is shameless. It is like a foolish beloved who makes no difference between good and evil. It is all evil. Despite all its evils, people are mad about it and they have become prey to its temptations. There is a consensus amongst people, be they believers or non-believers, truthful persons or hypocrites, that the world is bad - a place of abounding troubles and tribulations. Pharoah and Namrood got grossly indulgent in this world and they proclaimed themselves to be God. And Bal'am Baaoor and Birsees, despite their piety, became doomed because of their excessive indulgence in this world. It is the root cause of the wrong that we find in the progenies of Adam (AS). The elders (of the *Deen*) have said that this world is like a *daang* (sliver coin), half of which got buried in the earth along with Qaroon, and the other half came to the share of all the people. Just imagine, how much of it would come to the share of an individual. That is why the elders have dismissed this as the refuse of the humans. O brother,

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human refuse is not the thing that can provide pleasure and bounties to anyone. This means that a *Momin* (a faithful follower of Islam) should live in this world just as he spends his time in the lavatory by compulsion - going to the lavatory is a natural requirement of human beings: one does not enjoy being in the lavatory; he gets out of it as soon as possible. Similar to it should be one's attitude while living in this world. Just imagine how much of this world would come to the share of an individual. People have given up the *Dæn* and have been striving to gain as much from this world as possible. But don't forget that the *Dæn* and this world cannot go together.

O brother, in the Hereafter , people will have the vision of Allah in Paradise. Had not this been promised, the *sufia* would not even talk of Paradise. It is said that *Sultanul Aarifeen* (Khawaja Bayazid Bistami (Rah. A)) used to perform *Wadhu* (ablution) if he talked about "the world" and he used to take bath if he uttered a word about Paradise. When he was asked why he did so, he said that the world nullified only the *Wadhu* (ablution), but Paradise is the place where one's desires are fulfilled, and so it called for taking bath. Such attitudes are reflective of the state of one's spirituality; the highly accomplished lovers of Allah behave this way. Ordinary men of low spirits do not have a clue about it.-- It is pointless to talk about irrelevant things. A man showing gallantry with the sword in the battle-field is very different from the easy-going person relishing food and drinks. There is no comparison between a dervish and a king. Be careful, don't depend on your mind and intellect for an understanding of the stalwarts of the way (of

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Tariquat) and Allah's lovers. These people cannot be comprehended by ordinary minds. When the sun of love rises, the stars of mind lose their usefulness. Under the circumstances, we have no choice but to affirm our faith in them. The following verse describes this aptly:

The food that is served to the immensely pious people
Is not served to the beginners (of the way of *Tariquat*).

O brother, these dervishes are the real rulers; their authority and kingdom are not bounded by the limits of this world or the Hereafter. If someone was to ask where then their domain and authority lie, the answer would be in the great expanse of the realm of Allah's 'Care qand Bounty':

For us, there is yet another world,
Other than Paradise and Hell.

I have given only a very brief description of their country and kingdom; in fact, their kingdom is hard to describe. Despite this, they appear in the guise of a dervish and a down-trodden person, so that no one would know about their kingdom and kingship, and thus they would be saved from the vying eyes of people (It is true that vying eyes do have ill effects). These people call themselves by such names as dervish or *miskeen*, so that people don't get to know them, for these are derogatory words for a name which the people look at with disdain:

The people become the cause for trial and tribulation,
So get away from them at the earliest, and save yourself

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From any possible loss or gain that they may cause.

O brother, these dervishes consider it their height of achievement when they spend a night without food. The highest achievement of a dervish is his (self-imposed) hunger. Nobody who eats his fill of food can follow the path of the *Dæn*. The dervish eats when he has something available, but he would not ask others to provide him food, for this is very unbecoming of a dervish to ask for food .If Pharoah had ever experienced the pang of hunger, he would have never claimed to be God. He got trapped into the tribulation because he always had his fill of food. This is why it is said that if a person offers his prayers while he has filled himself with food, *Satan* sits by his side. On the other hand, if someone goes to bed hungry, the *Satan* runs away. The seventy two sects of Islam and the seven hundred groups of non-believers are all agreed that keeping hungry is praiseworthy, while eating one's fill of food is bad. Infatuation is like a fuel, and hunger is like a fire. Hunger burns the infatuation. It has also been said that hunger is like a cloud from which rains the wisdom, and if the stomach is full it leads one to committing sins. The following verse is the word of wisdom said in confidence:

> A contented person is really a king, even if he is poor
> He keeps His friends hungry,
> So that he may make them satiated with His own person.

O brother, do you know what it is to be a dervish or a *faqueer* (extremely poor person)? This is a protection against

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the tribulations of the world and its people. In the way of taking up *faquiri* (the way of *faqueers*), the most difficult and important part is that one has to keep hungry: the night they remain hungry is like the night of Ascension to them.

O brother, in the night of Ascension, the Prophet (SAW) was offered everything, but the Prophet (SAW) did not take any notice of them, and said: "*Faqr* (being a *faquir*) is my pride". It is said that when Adam (AS) was honoured and the angels lay prostrate before him and all the heavens were placed at his disposal, he suddenly witnessed the secrets of being poor and hungry. Immediately, he sold out all the heavens just for a grain of wheat, and, putting on the rag of *faqr*, he came out of the heaven and set off for the thorny land of the earth. On the face of it, it was a bad bargain:

When the secret of *faqr* dawned on Adam,
He sold out the eight heavens for a grain of wheat.

O brother, you did not get what Pharoan and Namrood got. Was it because you were not capable of them? No, it was because He wanted you to be saved from getting involved in the vices of the world like others. You can become safe from the tribulations of the world only if you remain contented with whatever you have. For this reason, take up hunger and poverty as your way of life, and hold firm to it, so that you are not deprived of the benefits of bounties given to people who are blessed with hunger and poverty. Do you know that, on the Doomsday, when

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the wealthy people of the world would see the bounties with which the poor and hungry people will have been blessed, they too would wish for it and would say, " I wish I had also led the life of hunger and poverty."

A contented person who lives in poverty,
He, in fact, is the king.

O brother, do you know that *faqr* (attribute of God-conscious poor person) is different from asceticism, and prayers? When one becomes accomplished in *faqr*, his concern is nothing but Allah. So why should one hover around an ascetic or arround one engrossed in prayers; if one wants gold, he should go to a jeweller's shop rather than to a grocery, or to a vegetable shop:

Why are you wandering about in the city streets?
Look for your heart in the place you lost it.

O brother, you were offered what was available in the place where you went. I am not sure what you had been seeking : were you seeking piety and obedience/prayers, or Allah. If piety and prayers were your objectives, you have attained them already - so you got your objective; be happy, become a *shaeikh* (spiritual mentor), have disciples around you, sit in a *khanquah*, hold feasts and gathering and add on to them day by day. But if you were seeking Allah, (then you should know that) all these that have been mentioned above are distractions. Have you not heard what has been said: "To get engrossed in the study of *Shariah*, offering prayers, reciting the holy Quran are all noble acts, but the splendour of those who seek none but Allah is unique".This has been subtly referred to in the following verses:

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Alas! the lion that was inherent in you has become a jackal;
The river flows under your feet, but you are dying of thirst;
While you are thirsty, you are getting the from the river;
You are sitting over the treasure, but you are begging from others,
Had you realized the truth about yourself, even the angels would have become your off-shoot.

Allah is Holy! Allah is Holy! Those who are the seekers of Allah are strange people; if they don't get the pleasure of achievements, their pain and sorrow for their deprivation come to their help: their one day's pain and sorrow is worth seventy to eighty years of piety and prayer of the ascetics.

Attar (Rah A) has nicely said:

Let the non-believers remain happily indulgent in their disbelief;
And let the believers remain contented with their beliefs;
For Attar, however, a speck of Allah's love is good enough.

O brother, the real dervishes, about whom we hear a lot, are not seen these days. The pious ascetics and the devotees engrossed in prayers are not of much help. Those who are exoterically practicing the *Dæn*, and those who are

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committed to faithfully practicing the rituals, cannot serve as the guide to the cherished destination (in search of the Truth): This is what is meant in the following verse:

Only love provides the comfort to the pensive heart;
Without love, no problem gets resolved;
Alas! I had my heart and soul spent in vain;
I did not realize the value of life.

O brother, what need be done now? Let us get down to work; there is still time. We have to get rid of our lowly self, our ego, and self; these have to be rooted out. Whether we are in the mosque, or in an idolatrous place, whether we put on a turban or a *zunnar* (cross- thread put on by the Hindus), we have to do it (have you not heard the dictum 'the essence that is contained in the wine is not found in the grapes'). The following verses subtly refer to this:

If in an idol-place the thoughts of my beloved fills my mind, It is unwise to go to *Kaaba*.
If *Kaaba* is not filled with the fragrance of the beloved,
It is an idol-place, and if the idol-place is filled with the fragrance of the beloved, it is *Kaaba* for me.

The same thoughts are conveyed in this verse.

The friend is in my house.
And I am looking for it elsewhere in the world.

O brother, don't look at the clay and water the man is made of; look at its attributes. Had it not had the real beauty, such a large group of holy angels would not have

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fallen prostrate before him, and the being made of clay would not have been honoured with *Khilafat*, Khawaja Attar has said:

> Not until Adam's (AS) person appeared, no body knew the way to the Lord ;

When Adam appeared, people not only got the way to the Lord, they also got the key to (insight into) the world. What this writer had (to say), he put it in this writing (People follow their own ways in keeping with their attainments in love).

O brother, have you any objective? But be on your guard. The elders of the *Deen* have said that it is your objective which, in fact, you worship, no matter how many times you recite the *Kalima* (there is none to be worshipped except Allah).

> Even if the whole world becomes the reward (*Sawab*) for you,
> You will remain in tribulation until you have denied the self in you.

O brother, now I would like to talk about myself. This wretched person (in his great humility, Makhdoom says this about himself) is an idol-worshipper and is a captive of his lowly self, and has done little to better his life in this world or the Hereafter. As such, he has no body to stand for him in this world and the Hereafter except those who are Allah's friends. I consider myself as the servant of Allah's friends

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from the core of my heart. I am not concerned with anybody else; I keep away from them and say:

I am standing in a vast surrounding where there are
sorrows, wistfulness, and misleading ways;
O *Khwaja* go your own way, for you cannot be
my companion.
By the grace of Allah, you have been blessed (to be Allah's friend). So please remember not to forget this wretched and forlorn person in moments when you enjoy the blessings of Allah. Those who are youthful and great do not enjoy their meals without sharing them with others.

BENEFACTION 13

Makhdoom-e-Jahan's Humility and the Resplendence of Iman (faith)

Sharaf Maneri, who is the dog sitting at the door-step of Ulama (Knowledgeable persons in matters of *Deen*) presents, ashamedly and with great regrets, his salutation to your Honour. I have to say that I am the most humble and sinful person, least deserving of the respect and humility with which you address me in your letters. But, indeed, your kind consideration reminds me of the story of the *musk*: some person said to the *musk* that there was one thing wrong about it. The *musk* asked what it was. He said, "You benefit everybody with your fragrance irrespective of whether one is good or bad". The *musk* said, "I do not look at others as to what they are - good or bad; I am concerned

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with what I am". Otherwise, I find little reason why this unfortunate, mean, and neglected person should be held in esteem and addressed by you with such titles as *Malek-ul Mashaekh* and *Qutub-al-Aulia*, presenting yourself as an humble devotee. It's a pity that this unfortunate person (i.e. the writer) has not risen above his lowly state of callousness and misfortune, degradation, idol-worship, and the ways of the infidels (the Hindus); the people, however, think otherwise about this unfortunate and forlorn hypocrite.

There is a legend that one elder of the *Deen* joined the funeral prayer of a departed person. After the prayer, someone said that the person (the dead person) had a good reputation in the town. The elder said that unless one was a hypocrite he could not be reputed to be good. Thus, if my reputation has prompted you to addressing me with honourable titles, I must say that *Satan* is much more reputed in this world than I am.

My honour, Islam does not manifest its resplendence to every filthy and uncultured person (None but the clean person should touch it). The following had been displayed at the door of an *Aalim*: "Many amongst them do not even believe in Allah (SWT), and they associate partners to Allah (SWT)". He has written off many a person from the list of those who believe in the unity of Allah. The ways of the *Deen* are not that simple, as people tend to think and present. Those who have really come under the umbrella of *Deen* have seen things in their reality and have known the Truth about the deeds. They pray: "O Allah, please grant

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me the end which had had no beginning". Some, in fact, have gone as far as to put on the cross-thread (of the Hindus) and have gone over to the temple. And setting aside their mind and intellect, they say:

> Here academic discussions are not entertained, so I keep silent;
> An intelligent word is not welcome, so I have become a lunatic (love-stricken person)

This is also the basis of the saying: "Be mad keen on God, but be careful in respect of *Shariah*." Now it is a different matter if these days some consider Islam as a set of rituals and habitual behaviour. Refuting this, it has been said: "Drink and be merry tonight; tomorrow the hang-over will be over when you will be faced with death". And when, at the time of death, you will have the vision (the blinds before your eyes would be removed), you will come to know whether you had turban on your head or a cross-thread on your body, whether you were sincere or a hypocrite, or whether you were in the mosque or in a temple:

> If you can't make a way in the *Kaaba*, make friend with a Brahmin and get into the temple.

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BENEFACTION 14
The Benefactions of the Words of *Mashaekhs* (Spiritual Leader)

O brother, make sure that you are regular in the routine observance of your *Wird-o-Wazaif* (performance of prayers and recitations). Never miss them, nor cut them short, and remember, never miss to go through the books and letters of the *Mashaekhs* (the pious elders). Listen, when someone asked a pious elder: "When our deeds are not in accordance with those of the pious elders, what good it will do us to go through these books and their sayings?' He replied: "The sayings of the *Mashaekhs* (pious elders) are like the God- sent army on the earth. If those who study their words are manly persons they would become like the royal lion, and if they are eunuch they would become manly persons. Someone asked a pious elder: "If there comes a time when the pious elders of the *Deen* are not to be found, and their company is not available, what should we do then?" He replied, "Under the circumstances, study some piece from their books daily".

O brother, listen, only those are really alive who spend their days under the benevolent cover of pious elders, or who keep busy studying their books. Those who do neither are not alive; they, indeed, are dead and are the captive of their lowly self. This has been nicely said in the following verse:

You are spending your days without doing anything

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for the Hereafter.
You think this is life; nay, this is death, not life;
You are after fame and fancy-living, and yet you seem to be complaining that the life is coming to an end, while you are in this state.

Whatever, from my writings, has reached you, you study it with devotion Don't study it casually as though it was a fiction - better still, study them when you are alone.

Someone asked a pious elder: "What should we do when the company of pious elders is not available?" He said: "In those days, study some piece from the sayings or writings of the elders daily, because, when the sun sets, people use lamps:

> If it has been my misfortune that the sun has set,
> I will have for my lamp your resplendent face.

BENEFACTION 15

The Invaluable Pearl of the Sea of Allah's Knowledge

> I have reached a river, the waves of which are man-eaters, And strangely, there is neither a boat, nor a boatman.

Do you know which is the boat and who is the boatman? Love is the boat, and Allah's Benevolence is the boatman. This river is fraught with dangers of many

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kinds. This situation is frightful. What will you do under these circumstances? Keep before you the words (writings) of this *faquir* (the author). It is hoped that you will safely get out of the turbulent river, the waves of which are man-eaters - provided you keep studying my words; all the difficulties in crossing this river would be easily resolved. Try to find solutions for your difficulties in these writings. You already have become acquainted with the meanings of these writings: you already understand the allegories and the principles contained in these writings. Therefore, I would advise you that, while you are reading, you should visualize that you are sitting before me and listening to me (for pen is also one of the tongues). Whatever words/writings of this well-wisher (Makhdoom-e-Jahan) reaches you; you should take them as the spoken words of this well-wisher, and take these words as the voice of the heart. Whatever the tongue is saying is, in fact, the calling of the heart (whosoever obeyed the spoken words did in fact obey the heart, and whosoever obeyed the Prophet (SAW) did, in fact, obey Allah). If you ponder on these things, you will realize that there is nothing but unity all around. So be at ease; you are fortunate. Now that you have plunged yourself in the river, may Allah bless you with success. The pearls of this river are very dear. The jewels in there are rare, and those who dive into the river and gather pearls are real lovers, truthful and daring. This cannot be done by lowly people, the eunuch and those given to eating and drinking. May he be blessed who has said:

Go away; busy yourself with your pastime,
For love is not your business.

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BENEFACTION 16
Exceptional Determination and Intense Love

O brother, you should know that once Khwaja Yahya Ma'az Razi (Rah A) wrote to *Sultan-ul Aarifeen* (Rah A) that there was a person who drank just one draught and became intoxicated. In reply, *Khwaja Sultan-ul-Aarfeen* wrote that there was a person who drank river after rivers and yet wanted more to drink, and had still been crying and complaining:

> The drop that fell in the river and lost itself,
> Considers it madness to seek all the worlds but not Allah.

O brother, love is like a fire, and the lover's heart is like a hidden fire-place. If the lover just breathes out, the world would get burnt to ashes, and, if he breathes in, he can burn himself to ashes. One who loves the sun does not have respite. Praiseworthy is the courage with which this creature made of clay and water has been graced.

O brother, those who are courageous people seeking the Truth are not the captive of time and space. They are not interested in hearing or seeing anything else. Some manly person has nicely said:

> He who is courageous is the man;
> At great heights, he lives by himself just as the sun.
> Whoever took courage and set out to travel on this path,

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He became the king, even though he might be poor.

Keep your courage above time and space; whatever is related to them (time and space) and are products of creation should be considered as distractions, idols, and cross-thread. Say what an *Aarif* (knowledgeable spiritualist) has said:

> This life is of nó value if Your proximaty has not been attained.
> And if one cannot vision the splendour of Your Beauty
> What good is this world?
> Malik Deenaar (RahA), the true traveller of the way to Allah, used to say in supplication:

"O Lord, if you grace me with Paradise but are not pleased with me, I would rather not want to be in this Paradise. I would rather like to be reduced to ashes, and would want Paradise to be given to those who seek It".

Ainul Quzzat Hamdani, who was deeply immersed in the love of Allah, says: "Food and drinks are the interests of this world, and if this very interest is carried over in the next world, what would differentiae us from animals!" Great are the men intensely devoted to Allah: their courage is extraordinary.

> The poor dog is a coward and so runs after bones,
> But the lion is lion-hearted and preys on live animals.

Have you not read: "There are many of my blessings unseen and unheard of that lay in store for My pious

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people". O low-hearted men, is this world simply for food and drinks? Some blessed person has said: "Many a Prophets were sent (for the guidance of people), but the indifferent people remained indifferent. Had it been that He had sent a speck of His love, no body would have remained indifferent: they would all have joined the company of friends."

O brother, love is such a ride that takes you across the two worlds in just one jump, and gets one landed in the limitless world:

> If you lay down your life in the world of love,
> You get your name entered in the book of love.
> Jabrail Amin would be under your heel, if you take a ride on love.

The seeker of Allah should be immersed in the love (of Allah (SWT)) so that he is allowed entry in the court of Allah. But let it be understood that, in this path, one is put on the gallows. It is not so easy that one is graced with this beneficence so easily. As has been said:

> If the beloved is amongst the flowers in the garden,
> The lover would not care if the approach to him is through thorns.

The Beloved is not far away from the lover (He is with you wherever you are). Indeed, the seeker (of Allah) may remain distanced from his Beloved if he is shrouded in his ego and self; if he gets out of his ego, he gets the vision of

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his Beloved, as has been said:

I did not know that the Beloved was right in sight (of us);
I did not realize that He was with us and amongst us;
I said to myself that I shall seek Him to get to Him,
But, I am afraid, this very thought spoke of the Separation between me and Him.

O brother, the leaders of the lovers become engrossed in love for the reason that Allah has said, "You and I are the same, and there is no one other than Me". It should not surprise anyone if in Mahmud's field the seed of love is planted and is watered by love, and this yields a crop of the kind of Ayaz. The lover gets lost in the commands of the Beloved, and as long as he is alive, he dances with joy at the thought of the splendour of the Beloved's Beauty. When, however, he ponders on the awe-inspiring majesty of the Beloved he starts crying:

Don't tell me why Saadi is worried;
The thought of His Face keeps me worried all the time.

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BENEFACTION 17
The Truth about the World; Love is based on Deception

O brother, you ought to know that the world is the farming-place for the Hereafter. Remain busy with your work as far as possible, that is, do the farming for the Hereafter. Try to comfort others and make them happy with your hand, tongue, pen and paper, money and materials. And consider it a great job. The evils of this world, its calamities and tribulations, are so much that it is impossible to recount them and put them in writing. Yet there is one thing good about it: it is the farming-place for the Hereafter. Someone asked an elder of the *Deen*: "How many ways there are to reach the proximity of Allah?". He replied: "Every little thing that exists in His world of creation leads to the proximity of Allah, but the best and the shortest path is through working for providing happiness to people - this is the nearest path. I attained whatever attainments I have through this approach, and I advise the same to my disciples".

In the presence of an elder of the *Deen*, someone said that the king of the city spends the whole night in prayers. The elder said that he had become oblivious of his duties, for the way of attaining spiritual accomplishments for him would be that he should feed the hungry with varieties of food, provide varieties of clothings to those who have nothing to wear, pacify the distressed hearts, and take care of the needs of needy people. Optional prayers and keeping

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awake at nights are the duties of the *fuquara* (Allah's devotees). Everybody should do the duty according to his responsibility. (The king), rather than keeping awake all night, should try to make happy the person with troubled hearts, for, while a broken thing is of no value, the broken heart is priceless.

It is reported that once Musa (AS) was thus supplicating: "O Allah, where can I find you?" The answer came: "I am close to those who are heart- broken in My love". Musa (AS) said: "O Allah, there would hardly be anyone more heart-broken than me." He was then commanded: "Then seek Me there; I shall meet you there".

O brother, if you cannot be graced with Paradise - which is the product of creation - while you are indulgent in the world affairs, how come, you can get to the Creator of Paradise while you keep involved in the world. For this reason, it has been said that the essence of all obedience and prayers is to shun the world. As this world creates a barrier between men and Allah, this world has become an anathema: this world and whatever there is in it are all an anathema.

But look here, be careful and try to understand that the wordly belongings that just about satisfy the wordly needs are not a curse. And if one has more belongings than he needs, which he gives as alms or spends in good cause, this too is not a curse:

> The world is not bad if you spend it in good cause;
> It is commendable if you intend to spend it in the cause of *Deen*.

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Yes, indeed, if someone is in possession of wordly fortunes, and he uses them for the fulfillment of the desires of his lowly self and gets involved in lascivious acts and infatuation, and falls in love with this world, then this world becomes a curse.

> If your heart has the right awareness (of the *Deen*),
> Then you would know that shunning the world is the greatest accomplishment in the way of the *Deen*.

O brother, Allah values only man's heart, not his external appearance (Indeed, Allah looks at the heart of man, not at his appearance nor at his deeds). If a man is occupied with wordly affairs, he must at least keep his heart (which is what finds favours with Allah) safe from falling in love with the world, for the reason that the love of the world is what obstructs the vision of the heart. When one's heart becomes blind, it blinds him to the Hereafter. For this reason, all the one hundred and twenty-four thousand Prophets gave the same message: "It is bad that the love of the world should develop in one's heart". If someone is in possession of the entire world, but his heart has no love for the world, he is not to worry. Don't we know that Prophet Sulaiman (AS) was the undisputed king of the world, but his heart had no love for this world, and, despite his kingdom, he led an ascetic life. Likewise, if someone is not blessed with the bounties of the world, yet his heart is filled with the love of the world, he, in reality, is a worldly man. It is reported that there was a learned person who had mastered the knowledge contained in the books that would fill four hundred boxes, and he remained all the time occupied with

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learned discussions and prayers, yet his heart was filled with the love of the world. The Prophet of the time had a revelation wherein he was asked to convey to the learned person that all his wealth of knowledge, his obedience and prayers, would be of no avail to him as his heart was filled with the love of the world. Someone has rightly said:

> If the love of the world dominates one's heart, he would be heading towards Hell even though he may have the knowledge of a thousand worlds.

O brother, we live in a strange situation these days. If a non-believer physician would tell us to refrain from taking a particular food because it was bad for health, we would immediately follow his advice. But the world witnessed the coming of one hundred and twenty-four thousand Prophets, all of whom preached that the love of the world was at the root cause of all evils, yet we did not refrain from the world, rather we worked day and night in the pursuit of this world. Under the circumstances, it would not be wrong to say that we paid heed to the advice of the non-believer physician but ignored the advice of the Prophets. Now tell us honestly : is it what we call the Islamic faith and being a Muslim!

> Shun the world, for this is *Deen*;
> Give it (world) away, and get it (*Deen*),

O brother, in this world, there live either *Aabid* (devotees engrossed in prayers) or *Aarif* (spiritually enlightened people). The focus of an *Aabid* is on the ending while the focus of an *Aarif* is on the beginning. The *Aabid*, in the height of his attainments, says: "O Lord, I did

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not do justice to the requirements of Your (Allah's) obedience". And the *Aarif* says: "I could not get the enlightenment about You as You really are".

O brother, the food for *Aarif*s body is 'service'; the food for the lovers's heart is 'proximity (of Allah)'; the food for the soul of the ardent seeker (of Allah) is 'the vision of Allah'; and the food for the *sirr* - the inner state of the heart of the ardent lover - is 'union (with Allah)'; when the body gets the food of 'service', he reaches *Sidrat-ul-Muntaha* (a high place through which the Prophet (SAW) passed in his journey of Ascension). When the heart gets the food of the 'proximity of Allah', he finds himself in that special recluse where his Lord provides him food and drinks. When the soul is graced with the vision of Allah, its step gets close to Arsh. When his *sirr* (spiritual secrets) is favoured with the 'union of Allah', he gets lost in ecstasy. At that moment, the yearning *Ishque* proclaims: " O body, get down to doing service and let 'service' be your focus; O heart, like a moth, sacrifice your self on the lamp of (Allah's) proximity; O soul, dive into the sea of (Allah's) vision ; O *sirr*, get devoted to the Friend. O body, when you got committed to service, you in fact, stepped on the forehead of the creation. O heart, when you sacrificed yourself on the lamp of Allah's proximity, you put up the tent of your courage in the place which does not allow hierarchical division. . O soul , when you have dived into the sea of Allah's vision, then look for commanding authority. O *sirr*, when you got devoted to the Friend, then eulogise His Holiness. O body, you have been created to rule, so don't accept to serve as a sentinel or a guard. O heart, you have been created to proclaim

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"*Anal-Haque*" (I am the Truth) and "*Subhani*" (I am holy), so don't run wild. O soul, the lamp of *Jamal* (awe-inspiring manifestations) is at its height, so you become the moth. O *sirr*, the deep sea of *Allah*'s omnipresence has an oyster's shell, you enter the shell and live in the company of the shining pearls.

O brother, when *Jamal* (graceful manifestation) manifests itself, it prompts the manifestation of indulgence, and when *Jalal* (awe-inspiring manifestation) manifests itself, it is time to make submissions and request. Love and indulgence give rise to happiness and delight, and submission and request are killers. Intoxication (of love) creates ecstasy, and, in that state, one exclaims: "Let me have Your vision", and he pours the wine of annihilation on the canvas of annihilation. (Musa (AS) became unconscious and fell down). When one says in ecstasy, "Will You let me have Your vision?" , he gets the rejoinder: "You can't see Me," and, in his state of self-annihilation, he says: "I seek your forgiveness". Those who are *Aarif*, they become dismayed when they are faced with His *Jalal* (awe-inspiring stance), and those who are His lovers are thrilled at the vision of His *Jamal* (splendour). The dismay of the *Aarif* gives him enormous pleasure, while the thrill of the lovers frees them from the bondage (i.e. they dissociate themselves from everything other than Allah, and they become completely devoted to Allah). Those who are lovers, they take pleasure in the vision of Allah's splendour, and those who are *Aarif* they get freed from their lowly self (or ego) at the vision of His *Jalal*. His lovers, who are engrossed in the vision of the *Jamal*, are adorned in the robe

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of high attainments, while the *Aarif*, who gets the vision of His *Jalal*, is provided the food of self- indulgence and graces. This adoration gives the lovers the enlightenment of the proximaity of Allah, and the graces and self- indulgence makes the *Aarif* capable of withstanding His *Jalal*. The splendour of *Jamal* opens up the door to the limitless expanse of the invisible world, and there sounds the voice which says: "Come forward, and make your efforts." At the vision of the splendour of *Jalal*, tears come out of the eyes: the curse of 'Allah hath sealed their hearing and their hearts' gets removed, and the voice comes which says: "O Adam, made of clay and water, be afraid (of Allah)".

O brother, *Jamal* comforts the heart, and *Jalal* helps the heart to get rid of the love of others (except Allah). At the sight of *Jalal*, it is said: "I inform you about the sword", and at the sight of *Jamal*, one makes the request: "O Lord give guidance to my people". At the sight of *Jalal*, he says: "The tribulations are from my Lord", and at the sight of *Jamal*, he says: "I wish I had more of tribulations". At the sight of *Jalal*, the men of way (of *Tariquat*) get comforted by getting close to the partner (O Humaira, talk to me), and at the sight of the *Jamal*, the women get men's manliness under their feet: Allah is Great.

It is usual with the *Ashique* (lover) that he is first treated with kindness, and then he is forsaken. He first gets acquainted with the pleasure of proximity of Allah, and then, at the end, passes through the pangs of separation. Just as the eagle is lured to fall in the trap, and then its eyes are stitched, and then it is taught how to prey, the lovers are

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also treated in similar way: the love is at first allurement, and then at the end it leads to death. This explains whey *Kalimullah* (i.e. Prophet Musa (AS)) was first allured by "And Allah talked to him," and when in his ecstasy he requested to have Allah's vision, he was told that he could not see Him (Allah). Thus he was made to understand that love is at first allurement and the end is death. O *Kaleem* (Musa), after having blessed your eyes with the enlightenment of My Resplendence, you were inflicted with the prick of "you can't see Me", so that you may understand that love is based on allurement. O *Khalil* (Prophet Ibrahim (AS)), from the shell of your existence, the pearl of a loveable being was created which was then offered for sacrifice, in order that you may understand that love is based on allurement. O *Maseeh* (Prophet Jesus (AS)) , you are the first evangelist and the sum-total of existence, yet you were put on the gallows of testing times so that you know that love is based on allurement. O *Habib* (Prophet Muhammad (SAW)), you are pivotal person in the realm of Prophet-hood, yet the non-believers stoned you because of their enmity - this happened in order to let you know that love is allurement. O those who have enlightment about Allah, you would not have been put to tribulations after having been graced with *Iman* and *Iaqan* (belief and conviction about Allah) had it not been for the purpose of telling you to understand that love is based on deception/allurement. O lovers of Allah, you would not have been passed through the suspense of long awaiting after having had been allowed the proximity of Allah, had it not been for the purpose of letting you know that love is based on deception/allurement.

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BENEFACTION 18

The Hierarchical Classification of Aulia Allah

O brother, you ought to know that from amongst the *Aulia* Allah (Allah's friends), there are four thousand who remain unrecognized by people. They neither know each other, nor are aware of their own graceful state. Neither they themselves, nor the people at large, have any awareness about their (spiritual) states. This finds mention in the Prophet's (SAW) traditions. Those *Aulia* Allah who have divine assignments for the management of world affairs number three hundred - they are known as *Akhyar*. There are another forty who are named *Abdaal*. There are another four known as *Autaad*, another three known as *Nuqaba*, and on top of them all is one known as *Qutub* or *Ghous**. These people know each other, and they depend on each other for carrying out their divine assignments. In this respect, there is a tradition of the Prophet (SAW) which says that Khwaja Owais Qarni lived unrecognized in the guise of a shepherd, and none except the Prophet (SAW) knew about him. On the day of judgment, he would be brought in the company of seven thousand angels of like-appearances so that he remains unrecognized, so that no one may approach him. The place or region, for which a particular wali has assignment, has the blessings of the

*Apparently, there has crept in some error here. The total number of such Aulia Allah is 356, the break-up of which is given later.

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particular wali. This blessing comes to the *wali* from the heart of the Prophet (SAW). There is a tradition of the Prophet (SAW) in respect of Khwaja Owais Qarni which says: "On the Doomsday, the blessed ones would be asked to proceed towards *dar-as-salam* (Paradise), while Owais Qarni would be told. "Now that the sun of the Doomsday is blazing, you come forward and intercede with Me on behalf of the sinners of the followers of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and pray that they be forgiven. I have decided that as many sinners of the followers of My *Habib* (Muhammad SAW) as equal the number of hairs on the bodies of the herds of goats belonging to the clan of *Rabi* and *Muzir* would be sent to Paradise under your leadership".

Now see, as long as Owais Qarni lived in this world, he kept himself unrecognized from the people. He was the most wretched person in the clan to which he belonged: he would go forward and face the barrage of stones whereever it occurred. Everybody would make a mockery of him and belittle him, while the Prophet (SAW) found his good fortune and eternal blessedness inscribed on the tablet of his Prophet-hood, and he said about him that he (the Prophet SAW) feels the fragrance of the Lord coming from Yemen.

When Harmiz bin Habban (RA) met Owais Qarni, and requested him to narrate some tradition of the Prophet (SAW), he said, "I would not dare do this, and furthermore I have no time for gathering people and be called *Muhaddis* (the learned scholars of Prophet's traditions) or *Mufti*

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(Jurist). I keep myself busy with other things which are more important for me; so please excuse me. Such things have become obliterated from my heart. I have no time to become a *Muhaddis*; I am so engrossed in the basic article of faith, i.e. 'There is none to be worshipped except Allah' that I have no time for other things".

In *Majma-us-Saayereen*, it has been stated that there are 356 *Aulia* Allah occupying the positions in the spiritual world, charged with the divinely assigned responsibilities to manage the world affairs. These are permanent positions: if someone amongst them passes away, the position is immediately filled up by some other, keeping the total number fixed at 356. This whole group of *Aulia* Allah is divided into six groups of 300, 40, 7, 5, 3, and one - this one is *Qutub*; the benevolence of whose existence is responsible for the world's staying in place. If anyone amongst them passes away and his position is not filled up, the world would be ruined. When the *Qutub* passes away, his position is filled up by one amongst the three immediately lower down in the hierarchy, and the vacancy thus created in the group of three is filled up by one from the immediately lower ladder of the hierarchy, and the process is continued down to the lowest ladder of three hundred, and the vacancy in this group of three hundred is filled up from amongst the rest of the people. Thus the total number is all the time maintained fixed at 356. The blessing of this collective group of 356 *Aulia* Allah manifests itself all the time throughout the whole world, but they lead such a life that they remain unrecognized by the public: apparently they live like common people, but at heart they

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live in the proximity of Allah. Love, saintliness, and meaningfulness are concerned with one's inner self. They (*Aulia* Allah) are endowed with such great power and authority that nothing - soil, water, fire, air, desert, mountain - can stand in their way. If they are in the east, they see and hear people in the west. And if they are in the west, they see and hear the people in the east. Be it land, sea, mountain, or field, they do not care; they can, in the twinkle of an eye, go to the farthest east from the west, and vice versa; likewise they can reach the *Arsh* in a moment and come down the next moment. Many other examples of their capabilities can be cited. Here are a few verses in their eulogy:

The blessed people who have blessed heart
Know the secrets of the invisible world;
Their heart's mirrors are ultra clean; there is not a speck of rust in them.
For this reason, they have forsaken everything, other than Allah.

BENEFACTION 19
The Milestones of Spiritual journey and an Awareness of Death.

O brother, you ought to understand that unless the *Salik* (the seeker of spiritual way) does not travel through the worlds of *Naasoot, Malakoot, Jabaroot*, and *Lahoot*, he does not reach his cherished goal. These stages are covered in succession (for example, he can enter the world of

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Malakoot only after he has gone through the world of *Naasoot*, and so on). *Naasoot* is the world of the animals; in other words, *Naasoot* is the world of the evil attributes of the lowly self, and this is concerned with the five senses of a man, such as touching, eating/drinking, seeing, hearing and smelling. When one overcomes these attributes through self- discipline and exercises, he goes past this world and reaches the world of *Malakoot*. This is the world of the angels. Here one is concerned with devotional prayers: these are the attributes of the mind which develop the attributes of the commendable (social) behaviour. Having passed through this world, one reaches the world of *Jabaroot* which is concerned with the special attribute of the soul, such as enthusiasm and fervour, solicitation and overwhelming enjoyment, tranquility and ecstasy (*sukr** intoxication i.e. getting lost in the love of Allah and *sahw* consciousness, i.e. getting out of lowly human attributes). Herein one is blessed with the proximity of Allah. When the *Salik* gets over these attributes, he enters the world of *Lahoot*, for as long as the *Salik* is possessed of these attributes, a blind remains interposed between him and the Lord. When the *Salik* loses consciousness about all these attributes, he reaches the world of *Lahoot*: "And that the Lord, He is the goal" -- *An-Najm*, verse 42. And this is the limitless space : here there is nothing to talk about, nor anything to seek after. Having said all these, let it be known

Sahw, Sukr, etc. have special meaning in Tasawwuf, and so their literal translation is difficult. One may consult Risala-e-Qushairiya for details.

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that the people can be categorized in three groups: (1) Greedy, (2) Repentant initiate, (3) Advanced *Aarif*. The greedy is oblivious of death, and if, at all, he remembers it, his only concern is that it will deprive him of the pleasures of the world. For such a person, the remembrance of death distances him from Allah. The repentant initiate remembers death very much, and that too for the purpose that the fear and consciousness about Allah enlivens his heart. Such a person remains steadfast in seeking forgiveness. The advanced *Aarif* is ever- conscious of the death because he is aware that it would be only after death that he will have the vision of Allah. The lover can never be oblivious of the place where he is promised to have the vision of his True Beloved.

In short, the remembrance of death dismays the heart. It distastes the tasteful recollections of the world. It takes away from the heart all likings for the sources of pleasure and enjoyment. A tradition of the Prophet (SAW) also points out that the most frequent remembrance of death writes off the sins: "Remember death and return back to the Lord". Ayesha (RA) asked the Prophet (SAW): "Who would be resurrected along with the martyrs on the Day of Judgment?"The Prophet (SAW) said: "Yes, indeed, whoever remembers death at least twenty times a day would be resurrected along with the martyrs". Ka'ab Ahbar (RA) said: "Whoever got an awareness of death, he takes easy the sorrow and tribulations of the world."

It is said that if someone talked about death to Isa (AS), blood would start dropping out of his body.

O brother, remember death at least twenty times a day,

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rather remember it as many times as you possibly can and keep in waiting for the death, for it may come any day. Imam Thori (Rah A) says that he saw an old man in a mosque in Kufa who was saying: "I have had been waiting for the death for the last thirty years in the mosque. Let us see when it comes. I am in the state that nothing is outstanding against me. Neither someone owes me anything, nor do I owe anything to anybody".

BENEFACTION 20

Claim be Substantiated with Proof

O brother, my salutations to you. I received your letter, which mentions your state of intense fondness and longing (for the Beloved). Indeed, the lover is always fondly looking forward to meeting his Beloved. O brother, now that you have claimed to be in love (with the Lord), you have to provide the proof for it. For this reason, it has been said that it is easy to make a claim but is difficult to substantiate it with proof.

O brother, it is an issue which makes one lose heart. You have to keep yourself alert; whosoever makes a claim is not let go without providing the proof. Let us recall what happened to Prophet Ibrahim Khalilullah (A.S.). When by the order of the wretched Namrood, he was put in the catapult, he said: "Allah is enough for me." While he was still in the air, Jibrail (AS) asked him if he desired something; Ibrahim (AS) said: "Yes indeed, but I do not

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want anything from you". This way he gave the proof for his claim. One day when the Prophet (SAW) met Harith (RA), he asked him: "O Harith, How did you spend this morning?" Harith (RA) answered: "I spent the morning in the true state of a *Momin*." The Prophet (SAW) did not let him go without providing proof for his claim. The Prophet (SAW) asked him: "Every truth has a basis. How would you describe the truthfulness of your *Iman* (belief)?" He provided the proof as follows: "I assessed myself from (what I did in this) world. I spent the night without sleep, and the day I spent in the state that gold and silver appeared to me as good as stones. I found myself in the state that I could clearly see *Arsh*; I also saw the people in Paradise meeting each other, while the people in Hell were further going down in the abyss." Had not Harith (RA) provided this proof, how belittled he would appear before the Prophet (SAW).

Once an elderly saint came to a group of *Fuqara* (poor people devoted to Allah) and saluted them in the Islamic way. They asked him who he was. He answered: "the servant of *Fuqara*". They asked a person from amongst the group to take the man to the market place and sell him. He took him to the market place and sold him. When the buyer took him home, he was surprised at his good behaviour and routine devotional practices, and he (the Master) could not understand how was it that such a person became a slave. He, therefore, said to him: "Will you please let me know the background of this matter? You are free from any bondage with me; continue your normal devotional practice." The elderly saint said: "The truth of

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the matter is that I had claimed that I was the slave of *fuqara*, and so I was required to substantiate this claim, and the consequence of this is what you witnessed".

O brother, one should avoid making claims; otherwise you would be required to substantiate it with proof - this is the requirement which is very difficult for us to fulfil. Eunuch cannot do what is the job of the man.

O brother, when someone professes that 'there is none to be worshipped except Allah', he immediately dissociates himself from everything else. This way he claims to be in love with Allah, and so he is required to provide the proof - no claim is acceptable without proof. When we say that there is no God save Allah, we make the claim that there is none except Him (Allah). This claim would be valid only if we are not afraid of anyone except Allah, and also if we repose our hope only in Him and nobody else. If we are afraid of others, and if we repose our hope in others, we are not living upto our claims. And such claims have no standing and would be of no avail on the Doomsday. In our daily life, we refrain from sins if we find someone watching us, but the irony is that we are committing sins even though we know that Allah is watching us all the time. This only proves that we are afraid of the people but not of Allah. Let us assess ourselves whether we are Momin or an infidel, given the fact that we fear people but not Allah ! In short, no one would be taken for his words unless he substantiates them with proof. How then can a disciple, who claims to be the seeker of Allah, be spared without substantiating the claim with proof?

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O brother, just as silver and gold are tested for their purity by heating them in the fire, so also *Momins* are tested through trial and tribulation in order to find out who amongst them is a true *Momin*. All the hardships and tribulations, blessings and comfort, that one is made to pass through in this world, are, in fact, meant for the purpose of testing whether one is a true or a false *Momin*.

BENEFACTION -21
The World is the Realm of Satan

O brother, be it known to you:
Alas! I spent my whole life in the streets where lived idols;
Pity on me that, like an old Brahmin, I lived my whole life in the idol- house.

O brother, this world is such a bad place that a religious elder identified it with a lavatory. Who would like to live in a lavatory, and work there to attain beneficence and pleasure, and take pride in the place!

It is reported that the world is the domain of *Satan*. When someone puts his hand on it, the wretched *Satan* reminds him that he had put at stake his *Deen* and *Iman* (belief in Allah, and obedience to Him), and only then this world was put at his disposal. So whoever enters his domain, he should understand that he is putting his *Deen* and *Iman* at his (*Satan*'s) disposal.

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BENEFACTION 22
The Evil Self (nafs)

O brother, those who are spiritually knowledgeable (*Ahl-e-Ma'arafat*) have said: that the common man has three idols:

1.The longing for food and drinks, and passion (love) for it.
2.The sexual infatuation, and passionate desire for it.
3.The love for the family (wife and children)

The elite also have three idols:

1.The love for wealth.
2.The love for worldly titles and authority.
3.The love for looking fashionable.

In addition to these six idols, there is the seventh one, and that is *Nafs* (the evil self), and it is the prime idol. *Nafs* is the greatest idol. This is why in *Shariah* (Islamic jurisprudence) combating against the *Nafs* is the greatest *Jihad* (holy war): The Prophet (SAW) said, "I have turned towards *Jihad-e-Akbar* (the great *Jihad*) after *Jihad-e-Asghar* (small *Jihad*)". The infidel can be fought with the sword, but *Nafs* is such a hidden enemy that there is no way to fight it back, and there is no one safe from it. Someone has said:

The Brahmin has the idol in his home, but I am worse,
For the idol of *Nafs* is seated safe in my wicked heart.

Now that you have come to know about the idols of

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the common man and the elite, you must understand that we are involved in idol-worship invisibly while an infidel's idol-worship is apparent and visible. This is the only difference (between us and the infidels). Under the circumstances, our robes and turbans are as worse as the temples and cross-threads of the infidels.Very rightly, someone has been bold enough to say:

I worshipped idols secretly, and had the corss-thread
of infatuation hanging from my neck.
I speak it out to you - why should I keep it a secret.

O brother, whatever gets interposed between the Lord and His servant and keeps the servant indulgent, is, in fact, his idol according to the true seekers of Truth (Allah). This is a fact, no matter what you think. It hardly matters whether we have stone-made idols before us; we are involved in idol-worship in the true sense, for we are doing things according to the concept of idol-worship. For this reason, it is also regarded as an idol. Someone has rightly said:

I am an idol-worshipper; I am an idol worshiper;
I am telling you what I, in fact, am; I am telling you
the truth.

O brother, would you like to hear about *Nafs*, the head of all idols ? The longings of this *Nafs* are all against the Will of Allah. Whatever Allah demands from us, the *Nafs* demands the same for itself. Don't you see that Allah wants us to eulogies Him: the Nafs also wants us to eulogies it; the Nafs also wants that the whole world praises it. Allah wants us to obey Him; the *Nafs* wants us to obey it.

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Allah wants us that we should thank Him for His bounties and blessings; the Nafs also wants us to be all-praise for its philanthropy and favours. Allah wants us to be all the time looking towards Him and to fear Him (i.e. remain conscious about Him all the time); the *Nafs* claims the same. All the attributes that are exclusively Allah's, the *Nafs* wants them for itself. Not until a man (in his self-conceit) thinks that he is possessed of these attributes, he does not claim godhood for himself. When Pharoah got into his head the pride of greatness and thought that he was possessed of these attributes, he claimed to be god (he said: I am the great Lord of yours"). Don't have the misconception that only Pharoah suffered from such thoughts, and that we don't suffer from such thoughts. In fact, such claims and thoughts are seated in everybody's *Nafs*. The only difference is that Pharoah did not fear that he would be executed for making such claims, and so he proclaimed that he was (the great Lord); he was the most powerful person of the time so he feared nobody, while our *Nafs* is afraid that it would be killed, and so it does not make such claim publicly. What Pharoah claimed publicly, we claim within ourselves; otherwise there is little difference. In this regard, some intellectual has rightly said:

> You may think that you are a Muslim,
> But I feel that I should get a cross-thread tied to your hand.

O brother, the pretence of the infidel *Nafs* is such that one can hardly remain safe from its trap unless Allah's blessings save him. If the infidel *Nafs* gets an opportunity, it

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can, within the twinkle of an eye, dismiss our claim to be a Muslim, and, with cross-thread tied to us, it can make us submit to hundreds of idols. This has been aptly described in the verse:

As the infidel *Nafs* has entered in our nature,
There remain only a few true Muslims.

We should never consider our *Nafs* as our well-wisher, and never think that we are safe from its machinations. Whenever it claims to be a Muslim and displays its honesty and piety, don't trust it unless you have tested it. Remember, even though Prophet Sulaiman (AS) was a Prophet and an innocent person, he put himself to test. Someone from amongst those who delve into the deeper meaning of a matter has interprented Prophet Sulaiman's (AS) story as follows:

When the *Nafs* of Sulaiman (AS) showed off its piety and innocence, he did not take it as such; he did not believe it unless he put it to test. He prayed for himself that he be made the undisputed king of the world: this was meant to test his *Nafs*. He prayed: O Allah, Give me the kingdom of which I become the undisputed king. The greatest pleasure that the *Nafs* enjoys is to become a king and have a kingdom. As the Prophets are spiritually enlightened people, and are aware of the machinations of the *Nafs*, he did not trust his *Nafs*; he rather put it to test. So we find that even after Sulaiman (AS) was made the undisputed king of a great kingdom, he remained unchanged and followed his old routine of knitting bags and selling them for two breads : one of the breads he gave to *Fuqara* (poor devotees

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of Allah (SWT)) and the other bread he shared with destitutes. Now imagine, if the Prophets are so scared of the mischief of the *Nafs*, what chance we have to resist its mischief. For this reason, the men of *Tariquat* - *Salik* - and the seekers of the kingdom of Truth have gone through extreme hardships to keep themselves safe from their *Nafs*. They have almost killed themselves to save themselves from the machinations and pretence of the *Nafs*. Some of them have even put cross-thread on themselves and gone to temple. All these have happened because of *Nafs*. Someone has said:

> O Brahmin, let the Muslim, disowned by Islam, enter your temple;
> Or would you say that there is no place for such an astray person even in the temple.

BENEFACTION 23
The Most Accomplished Spiritual Guide

O brother, someone from amongst the *Mashaekh* (spiritual leaders of Muslims) saw in the dream that Khwaja Ma'aroof Karkhi was making loud utterances in the state of intoxication/ecstasy. Allah (SWT) asked the angels who he was and why he was wailing (this was despite the fact that Allah (SWT) knew as He is all-knowing). The angels answered that he was Ma'afoof. Allah (SWT) then told the angles that this Ma'aroof was one who was lost in the state of ecstasy simply in My love; and he would come to senses only after he would have My vision.

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O brother, those who are *Sadiq* (truthful; loyal) are scared by the caution: "That He may ask the loyal of their loyalty" - *Al-Ahzab*, verse 8. Those who are obedient are trembling under the threats of "Those who are faithfuls have impending dangers". Those who are observant devotees and ascetic, and those who are *Aarif* (knowledgeable about the spiritual world) and *Aalim* (religious scholars) are all frightened and worried because of the indifferent attitude of the Lord: "Allah (SWT) is altogether independent of (His) creatures" - *Al-Ankabut*, verse 6. If they wander in the street of *Ma'arfat* (mystic knowledge), they are told . "And they esteem not Allah (SWT) as He has right to be esteemed" - *Al-Zumar*, verse 67. If they get engrossed in prayers, they are told; "And they are asked naught else than to serve Allah (SWT, keeping religion pure for Him" - *Al-Bayyinat*, verse 5. And if they detach themselves from both (i.e. *Ma'arfat* and prayers), they are told: "I created the jinn and human kind only that they might worship Me"-*Adh-Dhariyat*, verse 56. And if they become unconcerned (about Allah (SWT)', they are told: "Thy Lord is strong in punishment" - *Ar-Ra'd*-verse 6. If they want someone to intercede on their behalf, they are told: "No one would talk except he who would be permitted by the Lord and he would say only what is right" - *Al-Nisa*, Verse 38.

If they become self-conscious, or look towards others, they are told: "If you commit *shirk* your deeds will be nullified" - *Az-Zumr*, verse 56. If they want to get lost in love, they are told, "I shall keep guard over you". If they want to do something secretly, they are told: "He knoweth

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the secret (thought) and (that which is yet) more hidden" - *Taha*, verse 7. If they want to live in seclusion, they are told: "Whither to flee!" - *Al-Qiyamah*, verse 10. If they want to escape somewhere, they are told: "And unto Him is the journeying" - *Al-Maida*, verse 18. If hey think that they should detach themselves from everything and everybody, they are told: "As for those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our paths, and lo! Allah (SWT) is with the good". *Al-Ankabut*, verse 69. If they are ever-striving, they are told: "He selecteth for His mercy whom He will" - *Al-Imran*, verse 74. If they think that they are safe, they are told: "Are they then secure from Allah's(SWT) scheme?" - *Al-Araf*, verse 99. And if they complain (seek redress), they are told: "He will not be questioned as to that which He doeth"*Al-Ambiya*, verse 23. His ways are in-comprehensible; when the Prophet (SAW) himself is faced with such a situation, who else can complain! Listen, one morning when the Prophet (SAW) woke up, his seventeen hairs had become white. His companions asked him how was it, O our Master! He (i.e. Prophet (SAW) answered that Surah Hud had been revealed to him, and that it was because of the Lord's command in the verse "So tread thou the straight path as thou are commanded" (Verse 112, Surah *Hud*).The Prophet (SAW) further said that if he slept in his woollen cloak the Lord would say: "O those enveloped in thy cloak, arise and warn!" - *Al-Mudath*-ir, verse 1-2. If I (the Prophet (SAW) take off my cloak in order to call the people, the Lord says: "And part from them with a fair leave-taking" - *Al-Muzzammil*, verse 10. When the Prophet (SAW) asks what he should do, he is told, "O Muhammad, you want rest, and I want you to be always on your toes;

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you want to complete your job and sit in isolation, but I want you to be busy with Me all the time". When the Prophet (SAW) is having happy time, the Lord tells him: "Exult not; lo! Allah (SWT) loveth not the exultant" - *Al-Qasas*, verse 76. If the Lord sees him (i.e. Prophet (SAW) dejected and oppressed, he is told: "Well know We that thy bosom is at times oppressed, by what they say" - Al *Hijr*, verse 97. If he (the Prophet) indulges too much in prayers, then the Lord says: "*Ta-ha*. We have not revealed unto thee (Muhammad) this Quran that thou shouldst be distressed'-*Taha*, verse 1-2. If he (the Prophet (SAW) spends not as much time in prayers, he is told: "And serve thy Lord" - *Al-Hijr*, verse 99. If he (the Prophet (SAW) sleeps at night, he is told: "Keep vigil the night long" *Al Muzammil*, verse 2. If he (the Prophet (SAW) sits happily behind the curtain, he is reprimanded that that is not his mother's doorstep. If he (the Prophet (SWA) shows soft corner towards his relatives, he is told: "And warn thy tribe of near kindred" - *Ash-Shu'ra*, verse 214. If he (the Prophet) becomes tough, he is told: "And lower thy wing (in kindness) unto those believers who follow thee" - *Ash Shu'ra*, verse 215. If the Prophet (SAW) becomes lenient, he is told: "Be harsh with them" - *At-Taubah*, verse 73. If he becomes harsh, he is told: "If thou hadst been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from round about thee" - "*Al-Imran*, verse 159. If the Prophet talks straight without inhibition, he is told: "And address them in plain terms about their souls"-*An-Nisa*, verse 63. If his (the Prophet (SAW) expressions sound hyperbole, he is told: "Then speak unto them a reasonable word" - *Al-Isra*, verse 28.

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If we find such things featuring in the life of the Prophet (SAW), one can imagine the worries that upset the humans made of clay. Why should humans not lament on themselves! At the time of death, it might be that the Lord, in his indifference, dismisses the entire lot of one's deeds as of no value, and during the agony of death many an obedient hearts will be doomed - "there will appear unto them, from their Lord, that wherewith they never reckoned" - *Az-Zumar*, verse 47. And many a faithful faces who would be laid in the grave facing the *Qibla* (Khana-e-Kaaba), would, in the very first night, be dismissed as a stranger. There would be some who would be told "Sleep in the grave peacefully as a just-wed bride sleeps", and there would be those who would be told: "Sleep like a (condemned) prisoner". In short, when the Lord forsakes someone, his obedience becomes of no avail to him, and when He graces, the sins do not matter. Prophet Khalil-ul-Lah (Ibrahim (AS)) was born in the house of Aazar (He bringeth forth the living from the dead -- *Al-Ana'am*, verse 96), and Kan'an was born in the house of Prophet Noah (AS) (and bringeth forth the dead from the living - *Yaunus*, verse 32). On the positive side, we find that Adam (AS), despite the wrong he did, retained his graceful position, and on the negative side, we find that *Satan*, despite his years of prayers and obedience, remained condemned. We see that some are addressed with the glad tidings: "for them there are glad tidings" - *Al-Zumar*, verse 17, while there are others who are told: "there will be no good tidings for the guilty" - *Al-Furqan*, verse 22, and they are doomed. We also see that there are some who are being

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distinguished by: "The mark of them is on their foreheads from the traces of prostration" - *Al-Fatah*, verse 29. There are still others who are identified by "The guilty will be known by their marks" - *Ar-Rahman*, verse 41.

BENEFACTION 24
The Will Of Allah

O brother, how can one who is himself lamenting on himself and is in trouble and is in a bad state remember others -talk to them or write to them? O brother, I am in such a state, and you are cross with me.

O brother, I have already lived the major part of my life and am nearing death and so am worried about the Hereafter. I shudder at the thought of what the Lord would say when the Angel of death would come to me and ask Him as to whether I should be allowed to die as a blessed faithful servant or as an ill-fated offender. Will he not be at his wits' end when one is himself in such puzzlement? This is the state described in a verse:

I do not know what has been written down
for me earlier,
Nor do I know what has been destined for
me in the future.

O brother, it is a very difficult task; neither can anyone understand this, nor is there any time to talk about it. What response one may expect from a person who was born in an idol-temple, where he was bred and brought up,

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and where he spent all his life in idol-worship? Who would know what will happen to him? May Allah bless him who said:

My forehead has become worn-out due to my
prostration before the idols.
How long would I pretend to be a Muslim

O Barhmin, will you let in (your temple) the person
who has been forsaken by Islam?
Or would you say that such a misguided person has
no place even in the idol-temple!

O brother, there are numerous entrances to Paradise as also to Hell. All commendable talks and deeds, and good behaviour are the entraces to Paradise; this is why all comforts and luxuries come to a man because of his commendable talks and deeds and good behaviour. Likewise, all bad talks and deeds, and bad behaviour are the entrances to Hell; this is why all troubles and discomforts are caused by bad talks and deeds and bad behaviour. Therefore, if one adorns himself with lovable talks and deeds and commendable behaviour, he protects himself from Hell fire, and he enters Paradise.

O brother, let us now understand that the first step a disciple has to take is to transform his bad behaviour into commendable behaviour. This is known as '*Gardish*' in the parlance of Islamic spiritualism, i.e. *Tasawwuf*. In other words, getting rid of one's bad attributes and inculcating good attributes is '*Gardish*'.

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For the disciples, this has its equivalence in *Wadhu* (ablution): just as one cannot offer his *Salaat* (prayers) without *Wadhu*, so also a disciple cannot take up *Tariquat* without *Gardish*. If someone wants to follow the way of *Tariquat* without going through *Gardish*, it would be like one's offering prayers without performing *Wadhu*. The degradation that you see these days in the society (of people who profess to be *Sufia*) is because people want to follow the ways of *Tariquat* without having gone through the rigours of *Gardish*. (We must understand that) there are preconditions for everything. Unless one fulfils the preconditions for the particular job, he cannot do the job. Thus *Tariquat* cannot be followed without *Gardish*. Those who are the *Shaikhs* (the leaders of *Tariquat*) are the ones who have passed through this route, and so they are aware of the pitfalls of this way (i.e. *Tariquat*). They have tamed down their *Nafs* (lowly self) and have freed themselves from all relishes and all demands of their personal self, and so they are well-acquainted with the way (of *Tariquat*). Therefore, a disciple should put himself under the care of a spiritual mentor and try to give up his bad attributes and inculcate good attributes under the care of a *peer* (i.e. the spiritual mentor). (In other words, one should try to transform one's bad attributes into good attributes under the care of a peer). Those whose hearts get filled with the agonizing thought of the Hereafter and who have pensive thoughts, they give up all bad and damaging attributes and reach the pinnacle of the excellence which characterize the stalwarts of *Tariquat*, and then they truly become the men. For such a person, it is obligatory that he should put himself in the service of a *peer* (spiritual mentor) who would

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lead him to the *Tariquat*'s way of excellence, train him according to the accepted way of *Tariquat*, and guide him safely through the ambushes of this way. Someone has nicely said:

Put yourself at his feet, and become the king.
Become his pride, and do whatever you like.

O brother, you ought to know that '*Kaamil*' (the most accomplished) is he who is gifted with the following four things:

i) Perfect *Shariat*, (ii) Perfect *Tariquat* (iii) Perfect *Haqiquat*, iv) Perfect *Ma'arafat*.

He who is gifted with the above four things is the real guide; he is the *peer* (spiritual guide); he is the *Shaikh*; he is the most accomplished (in *Tariquat*). These four things are a must for becoming a *peer*; those who are not gifted with these things are, in fact, in the darkness and have gone astray - this is what we see happening these days.

O brother, *Shariat*, *Tariquat*, and *Haqiquat* are distinct routes. By following the *Shariat* route, one attains the cleanliness of one's external self, and he becomes well-behaved. By following the *Tariquat* route, one attains the cleanliness of one's inner self, and his heart becomes clean, and he becomes worthy of Allah's favours: he despises his own self; he loves Allah; he never looks towards himself, nor does he make personal statements. He attains this state by extreme indulgence in *Zikr* (remembrance og Allah). By following the *Hqiquat* route, he becomes unconcerned with everything except Allah: he

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dismisses everything other than Allah, and gets lost in the splendour of Allah's Unity.

O brother, never become oblivious of your lamentations and miseries; that you are a Muslim should not make you feel relaxed about it - you should not take it easy -- for the disbelievers and those who associate partners to Allah all feel ashamed of our Islam. The Jews and the Christians all feel sorry for the state of our *Deen* (practical commitment to Islam). This is aptly described in a verse which says:

> I do not know who I am, for my deeds are such that
> I can hardly be taken for a Hindu, or a Muslim, or a
> defector from faith, or a wrong doer.

O brother, we are self-centered people, i.e. we worship ourselves: those who worship themselves cannot be the worshippers of Allah. Those who worship themselves should turn away from the mosque and go to temples (the idol-houses); such persons should say what an old man has said:

> Alas! I spent my life wandering in the lanes where idols
> live d;
> Like the old Brahmin, I remained stuck to the temple.

O brother, you are not far away from your cherished objective. This physical and spiritual world is with you, and their Creator is also close to you. So try to develop the eye that can vision the inexplicable splendours, and also try to develop the ears that can listen to unlettered words. May Allah bless him who said:

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The world has been lighted by the sunshine, but the eyes are blind;
He is the talk of the whole world, but the ears are deaf.

BENEFACTION 25
The Real Spirit of Salaat (Prayer)

O brother, you ought to know that it is stated in "Ruh-ul-Arwah" that the five time prayers is reminiscent of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He brought this as a gift from that holy world which is identified as *Qaaba Qausain* (Tell he was (distant) two bow's length or even near - *Al-Najm*, verse 10). O brother, you are too low a person to reach the *Zenith* of *Mairaj* (Prophet's Ascension). You don't have the grandeur that *Buraq* (the horse-like creature that the Prophet (SAW) had for the ride in his journey to the heavens - *Mairaj*) would come at your door-step. What will you do then? Now listen, first put on clean and sanctified (*Shariah*-approved cleanliness) dress. Then go to the mosque, the sanctity of which touches the heights of heavens. Join the first row of the angel-like *Momins* with great humility. Offer the prayer with great submissiveness. After having thus been in the confiding company of Allah,

come out (of the mosque) with the satisfying feeling of a friend.

Allah (SWT) has, in His infinite mercy, combined all the elements of *Shariat* in the *Salaat* (prayer). This is to say

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that the *Salaat* entails fasting, *Hajj*, and *Jehad* (holy war). When one starts offering *Salaat*, he has to be in the state of fasting, and he does something in addition to fasting. Just as he refrains from eating and drinking while he is fasting, he also abstains from eating and drinking during Salaat; and, in addition, he abstains from sleeping, walking, and doing normal work which are otherwise allowed during fasting. In *Salaat*, one also enjoys the pleasures of *Hajj*: in *Hajj*, one puts on *Ahram* (special coverings for the body) and recites *Tehlil* (words eulogizing Allah). In *Salaat*, we have corresponding elements, namely *Tahrema* and *Tahlil*. In *Salaat*, we also have the elements of *Zakaat* (compulsory alms). In *Zakaat* one has to pay five Dirham *Zakaat* on two hundred Dirham in his possession, and in *Salaat* when one recites 'O Lord, forgive me, my parents, my progenies and all *Momins*', one provides comforts to all Muslims. In *Salaat*, we also have the semblance of *Jehad*. When one prepares himself for the *Salaat*, he first performs *Wadhu* (ablution), which is like putting on the armour. When he joins the congregational prayer, the *Imam* (the person who leads the prayer) appears to stand for the commander of the army, and those who join the congregation may be taken for as the army which appears to have lined up behind the *Imam* standing resolute just as the Mujahedeen do until they win the battle and return back home with the war booty, which in the case of *Salaat* is the blessings that Allah showers on the attendees of the congregation when they have completed the *Salaat*.

In short, one who offered *Salaat* is like one who performed his *Hajj* while he had no resource for meeting

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the travel needs; he is also like one who fought in the way of Allah while he had no physical strength; he is also like one who payed his *Zakaat* while he had no wealth; he is also like one who fasted while he did not meet the obligatory requirements.

O brother, when one becomes a believer, he offers his heart; when he offers his *Salaat*, he offers his body; when he pays *Zakaat*, he offers his wealth. Never, indeed never, should you offer *Salaat* carelessly and unconsciously. The one hundred twenty-four thousand Prophets, who have been the priceless jewels of Prophet-hood and unerring obedience, have been always in quest of this robe, and thousands of Allah's devotees have spent their whole life with their hearts filled with the passionate desire to be able to offer two *rakaat Salaat* with the required devotion.

It is said that when prayer and humility get together in the disciple, the sparkling light of the prayer helps the disciple to get out of the *Muquam-e-Tafraqua* (the sate of duality) and to get to the *Moquam-e-Jama* (state of union); his body faces the *Ka'aba*, his heart faces the Arsh, and his *Latifa-e-Sirri* (the name of a locale of the manifestation of Allah's proximity in human body) lives in the vision of Allah. When the light of *Iman* (belief) of the disciple makes him wander on the *Arsh* in his state of ecstasy, the Lord of *Arsh* honours him with the distinctive favours which even the angels, who constantly live in the presence of the Lord, are not favoured with. O brother, when the Prophet (SAW) used to stand up for *Salaat*, with his soul in complete submission, his body occupied the place of his heart, his

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heart occupied the place of the soul, and his soul occupied the place of the *Sirr*, and the *Sirr* had the vision of Allah Almightly's awe-inspiring resplendence. To put it more specifically, his body stood in the place of *Dana*, his heart in the place of *Fata-dalla*, his soul in the place of *Qaba-Qausain*, and his *Sirr* in the place of *Aan-Adna* (these have reference to the verses of *An-Najm* when he was on the uppermost horizon: 'Then he drew nigh and came down. Till he was (distant) two bows' length or even nearer, verses 7-10). In other words, he visioned in his *Salaat* the manifestations of all the different vistas that he witnessed during his *Mairaj* (Ascension to Heaven). Also he would hear the words (of the Lord) without any intermediary and would get informed about the invisibles.

When the Prophet's heart would get overwhelmed (with passionate love of the Lord) and his *Lateefa-e-Sirr* would like to seek the proximity (of Allah), he would say to Bilal (RA) : "O Bilal, let me derive comfort with *Salaat*". In other words, he would ask Bilal (RA) to give the call for prayer so that his heart may derive peace and pleasure by offering *Salaat*.

Do you know why was it that way? Listen, in *Salaat*, the lover's (of the Lord) *Qibla* (the focus of one's attention) is the resplendence, par excellence, of the Friend (Allah) : his *Qibla* is neither the stone, nor *Kaaba* nor *Arsh*. The lover whose heart is burning with the fire of intense love offers his *Salaat* with such passionate devotion that he becomes oblivions of the rituals of *Ruku* and *Sujood* (bowing and prostration). All lovers are reckoned as equals,

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without any distinction as to who is superior or inferior:

> The prayer offered under the passion of intense love does not care for the formal rituals of *Ruku* and *Sujood*.
>
> Here the *Momins*, the infidels, the Jews all become equals, for the *Qibla* (focus) of all of them is nothing but the resplendent face of the Beloved: the love dismissed all other *Qibla*.

O brother, the purpose of *Salaat* is that it paves the way for making supplication. To start with, Allah (SWT) attracts the heart of the person who offers *Salaat* towards Himself. Then His indifference inspires awe in him so much so that, while the person offering the *Salaat* has his body engaged in *Salaat*, his heart is fervidly passionate with love , and his soul is engaged in heart-to-heart exchanges (with the Lord). His state is such that he is free of human apprehensions, and he is close to His proximity. At that moment, he looks towards no one. To this effect, the Prophet (SAW) has said: "If the person who offers Salaat becomes conscious about the Being toWhom he is making his supplication, he would never look towards others". Such a *Salaat* is something unique which the lovers offer. In such *Salaat*, the person loses his identification, and the person who loses his identification cannot turn towards anybody else. Don't you see that when *Amir-ul-Momineen* Ali (RA) was engrossed in his *Salaat*, the arrow piercing deep in his thigh was pulled out and he showed no signs of being hurt: this was because he was so deeply engrossed in the vision of the Beloved (Allah) that he had become lost of

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his identification. The person who becomes lost of his identification has no feelings of pains; if the whole Hell with its tribulation is loaded on him, he will have no awareness about it. And if all the blessings of Heaven are put in his mouth, he will not relish it.

O brother, the door to Allah's blessings is wide open, and the table has been laid. Come, hurry up, take your share, for the blessings of the Benefactor are available to all, and here there is no preference given to rich or the poor, the master or the slave. When the sun just rises, no one can avail of the sunshine even if all men gather together to benefit from it. But when the sun shines and decides to benefit the world, its light becomes available to everybody; it shines on the king's palace, as also on the poor man's hut and the remorseful abode of the dervish (it makes no distinction between them). Don't look at the clay and water (i.e. the creation of Adam(AS)), rather look at what has been said about it: "He loves them and they love Him; their Lord will slake their thirst with a pure drink"-*Ad-Dahr*, verse 21. The excellence of gentility and the adorations that have been accorded to you have not been accorded even to the distinguished angels. The angels are, indeed, favourites, innocent, holy, sanctified, lovable, and spiritual, yet this being, made of clay and water, is unique, and there is nothing comparable to it (in the entire world of creation).

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BENEFACTION 26

The Real Spirit of Fasting

O brother, you ought to know that *Arbaab-e-sidq* (the highly truthful and trusted people) have said that just as the intake of food and drinks is essential for the sustenance of the physical strength of humans, so also the sustenance of spiritual strength depends on hunger and thirst (starvation for Allah's sake is like becoming Allah's guest on this earth)

Amongst many other attributes of Allah, there is also the attribute that "He feeds but does not eat Himself". The person who inculcates in himself this attribute, becomes, according to the consensus of the people of wisdom and intelligence, closer to the proximity (of Allah) and distances himself from his human elements in his progressive stages of achievements. One who fasts, in response to the dictum 'Adore yourself with the virtue of divine manners' and holds himself from eating and instead feeds others, adopts the divine virtue and gives up his human attributes. He thus distinguishes himself with that very special reward which finds mention in the tidings: "The person who fasts is rewarded with two pleasures: one, that he has at the moment when he breaks the fast after having successfully completed the fast, and secondly, when he will be rewarded with Allah's vision (in the Hereafter)". The pleasure that one gets at the time of *Iftaar* (breaking the fast) is because this physical body, made of different elements, serves like a horse for a ride that takes the *talib* (seeker of Allah) on the

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way that leads to Allah. When the seeker of Allah received Allah's command to fast so that he is rewarded with Allah's vision, he denied his body (i.e. his ride) the food and started moving towards his Lord (Indeed, your sustainer The Lord is your ultimate destination) and covered different milestones of the way until it was dusk, i.e. *Maghrib* prayer time, and as the horse (i.e. the ride) had by then got tired, he completed his fasting by eating. This way both the traveller and the horse got their nourishments, and the strength that they thus derived gave them such a pleasure that, by comparison, all other pleasures appeared to be distressful and agonizing. As for the second pleasure, it is beyond description, for this has bearing on one's passion and the feeling of within : Those who did not taste it could have no appreciation for it.

It is stated in Kashf-al-Mahjoob that fasting is a tribulation for the body, a cleanser for the heart, love for the soul, and vision for the *sirr*. If the heart becomes clean, the soul gets love and the *sirr* gets Allah's vision; who would then mind if one passes through the agonies of the body. To this effect, one also finds a suggestion that is contained in a Prophet's (SAW) tradition which says: "Allah says that all good deeds are rewarded by Him anywhere from ten to seventy times, but fasting is special, and that He would personally give the reward for fasting". (Just imagine what He said: "Except for the fasting, for it (fasting) has been done for My pleasure, and I shall personally reward for it". Look at the Grandeur of the Lord , and witness the honour accorded to man. Had He said "what is your worth --- a dog at My door-step", one would have felt so elated at being

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homoured that way that one would have no words to express one's feeling of elation. He, the Lord of the Universe, instead said: "You are special to Me, and your reward is My vision". This compares with the tidings given to the martyrs of love: "He who gets martyred in My love, I become his compensation."

O brother, do you know what fasting is? Fasting is an act of Allah's obedience that helps man to get over his beastlike and ferocious traits, the heart becomes clean, and the *sirr* becomes cleared of all darkness. Therefore, you should regard fasting as a great blessing. It is a popular and well-known saying that when these people (i.e. the *Sufia*) want to hear Allah's words through their locale of *sirr*, they fast for forty days. When they thus complete thirty days, they brush their teeth, and then fast for another ten days: Then Allah talks to them through their *sirr* locale. The basis of it is that what Prophets are favoured with outwardly, the Aulia Allah are favoured with inwardly.

O brother, the door to the world of His Benevolence and Blessings is wide open. The table of bounties is set. Perhaps you think that if you don't avail of them they would remain intact and would become exhausted if you consume from it. Listen, the benefit of not eating is entirely different. When you eat, the Al-mighty Lord makes you engrossed in yourself, and when you remain engrossed in yourself you remain selfconscious. And the person who remains engrossed in himself finds the blinds interposed between him and the Beloved. And he who remains hungry finds himself in the proximity of Allah. Now you tell me, is

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it better to eat one's fill and remain deprived of Allah's vision or to remain hungry and have Allah's vision? In short, the disciple should act according to what a truth-seeker has said: "The world would last only for a day, and in here we have a day's fasting". Another truth-seeker has said: "Let the (abstinence from) the world be your fasting and the death be your *Iftar* (i.e. abstain from the world and relish death).

BENEFACTION 27
Verses Symbolising the Imageries of the Spiritual State of Sufia

O brother, if you want to understand the mysteries, the allegories, and the symbolism of *Sufia* and want to witness their states, read and listen to the following verses:

نمی دانم کرامانم بدیں سیرت گرفتارم

نه من هندو نه من مسلم نه من مرتد نه بدکارم

I don't know what I am, for my deeds are such
That I seem to be neither a Hindu, nor a Muslim
nor an apostate, nor a wrong-doer.

خلق می گوید برو زنار بندای بت پرست

در تن خسرو کدا میں رگ که آن زنار نیست

People say: O idol-worshipper, go away and put on the crossthread.

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The fact however, is that every single vein in Khusro's body is like a cross-thread.

سوده گشت از سجده راه بتاں پیشانیم
چند خود را تهمت دین مسلمانی نهم

My forehead has become worn out because of my lying prostrate before the idols.
This being my state, how long can I pretend to be a Muslim?

اگر کعبه ازوبوئے ندارد کنش است
بابوئے وصال او کنش کعبۂ ماست

If I can't feel the fragrance of my Beloved in *Ka'aba*, it is an idol-place for me.
And if I find His fragrance in the idol-place , it is *Ka'aba for* me.

بی وصال تو جاں چه کار آید
بی جمالت جهاں چه کار آید

If I can't get to live in Your proximity, my life is meaningless to me;
And if I can't have the vision of Your resplendene, what good is this world to me?

اگر حاصل شود آن گلرخ ولب جوی میگونش
چه بی حاصل کسے باشد دگر باغ جنان خواهد

If you have the company of your beautiful Beloved, having rose-coloured face and wine-like lips, Why should you still desire to be in the garden of paradise?

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مجنون عشق راد گر امروز حالت است
که اسلام دین لیلیٰ و دیگر ضلالت است

The *Majnoon-like* fervent lover is in a different state today;
To him the *Deen* of *Laila* itself is the real Islam, and the rest are all misleading ways.

مے از کف دوست هر نفسی می نوشند
سر می بازند و سر حق می پوشند

The friend serves the wine all the time with his own hand;
And (the lover) keeps it a secret, even at the cost of his life.

دین ماروئے جمال آن بت جانانه است
کفر ما از ابرو و زلف سیه ترکانه است

My *Deen* is the splendour of the face of my Beloved,
And my *Kufr* is his eyebrow and black hair (i.e. everything other than the face of the Beloved is a distraction).

از جمال خدو خالش عقل ما دیوانه است
از شراب عشق این هر دو همیں پیمانه است

The resplendence of his facial features (cheek and mole) has maddened my mind,
And these two (cheek and mole) serve as cups for the wine of love.

روح ما چون آن آنست و قلب ما بتخانه است
هر کرا ملت نه این است اوازما بیگانه است

My Soul is His ego and my heart is the idol-place;
Whosoever does not have this as his religion, he does not belong to us.

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از جام او مچش که دراں جام زهر هاست
گل برگ اومبوی که دراں زیر خار ها ست

Don't have a sip from his cup, for it contains poison;
Don't smell the fragrance of his flowers, for there are thorns underneath.

قومی متحیر اند در راه یقیں
قومیت دگر بمانده اندر غم دیں

There are people who are pleasantly surprised on the road that leads to firm belief;
Yet there are others who are simply concerned with the *Dæn.*

می ترسم ازاں بانگ بر آیدروزے
کای بیخبراں راه نه آنست و نه این

I shudder at the thought that someday there may come a voice saying:
O ye ignorant, neither this nor that is the right way.

مور مسکیں هو سے داشت که در کعبه رسد
دست در پائے کبوتر زد و ناگاه رسید

The poor ant desired to go to *Ka'aba;*
It held fast the feet of the pigeon, and suddenly it reached *Ka'aba.*

برهمن را بت انددر خانه باشدمن بدترازویم
که سر پوشیده انددر دل بدکیش می باشد

The Brahmin has the idol in his house, but I am worse.
For my self (low-self) is hidden in my ill-mannered heart.

پوشیده بسے خدمت بت کردم و زیں بس
زنار هوس می کندم از تو چه پوشم

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I have been secretly serving the idol.
And have had been putting on the cross-thread of ill desires--
Why should I keep it a secret from you.

در کوئے بتاں رفت همه عمر دریغا
چوں برهمن پیر به بتخانه بماندیم

Pity on me; I spent my life in the lanes of the idols;
Like an old B*rahmin*, I lived in the idol-place.

تو گرخودراهمیدانی مسلماں گوید آں یاری
مرا نزدیك شو کز دست تو زنار می بندم

If you thik you are a Muslim; say as you please;
But I would like you to get close to me so tht I tie cros-thread to your hand.

صوفی و سبز پوش شدو شیخ چله دار
این جمله شدی ولی مسلماں نشدی

You became a *Sufi* and you are dressed in green clothes and have become a *Shaeikh* who sits in the forty days' exercise of meditation;
You became all these, but (alas!) you did not become a Muslim.

زیں گونه که حال ناپسندیده ماست
حسن رخ تو چه لائق دیدهء ماست

With the ignoble state in which I am;
How can my eyes have the vision of your resplendent face?

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شب رفت و حدیث مابپایاں نرسیر
شب راچه گنه حد یث ما بود دراز

The night ended, but my story remained unfinished.
I can't blame the night, for my story was indeed very long.

صف عاشقاں است اینجا مده ای فقیه پندم
که بشهر بت پرستاں نتواں نماز کردن

O jurist, these are the lovers here, so dont give them sermons;
Prayers cannot be offered in the city of idol -- worshippers.

ز درد دیں همه پیران ره را
محاسنها بخون دل خضاب ست

The elder travellers of the way of (tariquat) are so concerned about the *deen*.
That their beard gets coloured with their heart's blood.

همه مردان دین رازیں مصیبت
جگر ها تشنه و دلها کباب ست

All stalwarts of *deen* this tribulation,
Have their hearts in great agony.

گرفضل کنی یقین برستیم همه
وگرعدل کنی وائی بررسوائی ما

If we are favoured with your Blessings, we would be assured of our deliverance from the agony of the hereaftrer;
But if you do justice, alas! we would be doomed.

مست چه خسپی که کمیں کرده اند
کار شناساں نه چنیں کرده اند

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What makes you sleep peacefully having no concern about anything; do you know there is somebody in the hideout? Those who are alert and knowledgeable would never do it.

چون نه بینم من جمالت صدجهاں خود دیده گیر
چون حدیث تو نباشد سر به سر بشنیده گیر

Why should not I look at Your Beauty and Splendour, while there have been so many who have had your vision? Why should not I hear the talk about you, while all others have heard it?

BENEFACTION 28
The Knowledge is the Prerequisite of Good Deeds

O brother, *Shariat* says: "Acquire knowledge even if it is available in China". But these days people act on the maixm: 'Acquire the world (i.e. worldly things) even if you have to go to China'. On the Day of Judgment, when we would be asked: "Were you not told that Acquiring Knowledge is mandatory; why is it then that you did not acquire knowledge?" What we would say then, we don't know. Shall we say that we had been busy caring about our children and earning our livelihood, and had little time for it. If this excuse becomes acceptable, then indeed we would be acquitted and have the occasion for feeling 'jolly good'.

O brother, without knowledge one cannot do good

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deeds which may be beneficial, and without good deeds one can't have one's objective fulfilled. Thus it is evident that it is obligatory to acquire knowledge. And brother, let it be understood that the knowledge we are talking about is not the one that helps one to get to the courts of kings, or the one that helps one become a jurist or *Qazi* (Islamic judge). The knowledge (I am talking about) pertains to the knowledge of the Hereafter, and the knowledge that leads one to the path of Truth (i.e. that leads to Allah). I mentioned this to you , so that you don't get misled. Keep yourself away from worldly-wise people just as you keep yourself away from the devil. Listen, one day an elder of the *Deen* saw the devil sitting idle, and he asked him why he was sitting idle. The devil said that the worldly-wise people were now available, and that they had taken over his job.

You should understand that the matters that a man is concerned with are of two kinds, one that help him reach the proximity of Allah - which are all concerned with obedience, and nothing but obedience - the others which are concerned with what distance him from Allah - and these are all concerned with committing sins. It is, therefore, obligatory for people to acquire knowledge of both of them - and this is the most important thing. After acquiring knowledge, if one puts some of it into action, this would find great favours with Allah. On the other hand, if one works hard, but without acquiring knowledge, these actions would not find as much favours with Allah - they would rather be like scattered dust particles.

Knowledge is male, action is female;
They give birth to *Deen* and wealth;

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Action without knowledge does not bear fruit;
Just as seeds without kernel donot bear fruit.

You must have read 'And whoever hopeth for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work, and make none sharer of the worship due unto his Lord'. - *Al-Kahaf*, Verse 286. (The acceptance of) Good deeds is subject to one's shunning all shades of belief in associating partner to Allah. And you know that you cannot attain the thing which has preconditions attached to it until you fulfil the preconditions . At this point, all *Salik* (seekers of Allah) feel pity for themselves. You and I are concerned with meeting our requirements of food and clothing (Indeed, Allah (SWT) has created some for performing in the battlefield, and some for enjoyment of food and drinks). The men are different from the eunuchs.

Now you should understand that the true knowledge of the Hereafter comes from being always at the service of *Mashaekh-e-Tariquat* (the accomplished guides of Islamic spiritualism) and the persons knowledgeable about the Hereafter. And these persons are rarely available these days. So what would you do under the circumstances? The thing you ought to do is that you should everyday study carefully one or two letters that I have written to you - you better read them in isolation. And recite the following verse:

If I can't buy the bag of sugar,
I can at least drive away the flies swarming
over it.

O brother, there are only two things that have to be done in this way (*Tariquat*) - and you must not underrate

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them. One of the things to do is to keep your physical organs untarnished by sins, and the other thing to do is to keep your heart clean of all evil attributes. If you accomplish the cleanliness of your inner and outer self (i.e. the soul and the body), you will find the secrets of this and the angelic worlds opened up before you - you thus will have drunk from the drink of "Thus I opened up before Ibrhim the secrets of the earth and the heavens" - and will become adorned in the robe of "Indeed, Allah is holy , and He accepts only what is unblemished." The door of the Friend is wide open; what is required of us is good deeds. Whoever gets the opportunity should avail of it; someone has rightly said:

The world is lighted with the shining sun, but the
eyes are blind;
He is the talk of the world, but the ears are deaf.

If you remain steadfast in your work, you would with good luck attain what others have attained; you will also witness what others have witnessed, and you will also be saying what others have said. Someone has nicely said:

The Beloved was just in front, but I did not
know,
He was with me, but I had no knowledge.

Praiseworthy is he who is highly committed, and, in his quest, he keeps trying seventy times a day to get to the *Arsh*, while there is the one who keeps himself bound up with earning bread and butter. This is the man who is addressed in this verse.

The dog found a dead body, and he took it as

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something alive;
The donkey found the barley, and he thought it was saffron.

O brother, these days everybody trusts false thoughts, and is happily disposed toward his mistrust. If the *Dæn* bad been all that easy, the Prophets and *Aulia* (Allah's friends) would not have had to bear with great hardships, and the hearts of the great men (of *Tariquat*) would not have been burning. O brother, you are not aware about the state of the great Men (of *Tariquat*). Keep conscious about the agony of what you have been missing, and, if possible, put yourself in the service of the great Men (of *Tariquat*). It is a great thing to do. On the day of judgment, one would be raised in the company of those whom he loves. This is not a mean reward.

O brother, one can attain the proximity of Allah either under the benevolent cover of the footwear of the Prophets or of the stalwarts of the *Deen*. All the rest is of no consequence. Behold, if someone cares about something other than Allah, he is not, for sure, one amongst the great Men of *Tariquat*, even if his focus is the bounties of the paradise. Do you know what the distinguishing ways of the Men of Tariquat are. A poet says:

If ever I have the wish for anything but the proximity of Allah,
I would rather say that 'God may not fulfill this wish.'
On the Day of Judgment, if I am offered to enter paradise along with pious people but without the Friend,

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I would rather go to hell alongwith the sinners.

O brother, it is popularly known that there would be things to eat and drink, and *Hoor* and *Qusur* in the paradise: this is what the people cherish. But do you know what the paradise of the great men (of *Tariquat*) is? It is the place where there are no *Hoor* and *Qusur*, but is the place where our Lord appears with His smiling and resplendent face. Someone has said:

For others, the promised reward has to wait for the Day of Judgment to come,,
But for me, it is all cash down, right now and here.

Let this be understood that the world of love is something different, and those who are lovers are unique. They don't have patience; they want the promised (reward) right now and here. And, in the state of ecstasy, they say:

Either get me my objective, or take away the objective from me;
Don't pend the promise for tomorrow; do it right away,. this way or that way.

O brother, someone asked Rabia Basri : "Why don't you ask for Paradise" ? She replied; " The priorities are : "First the neighbour and then home". Look at her spirit, and lament on your robe and turban. You ought to realize that you are neither manly nor a. feminine: what you are then! Once Imam Shibli disappeared; his disciples set out in search of him. They found him sitting in the company of eunuch, dressed in the eunuch way. The disciples were utterly dismayed and said to him, "O my mentor, you are our leader; how is it that you have adopted this guise"? He

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(Shibli (Rah.A)) said: "I looked into myself and found that I was neither a feminine in appearance nor was manly in spirit, so I said to myself that I must be an eunuch, and a eunuch must live in the company of eunuchs".

O brother, these people are a different breed. They are the majesty of high spirits. Whatever they do, they do for the sake of Allah. Their prayers, their obedience, their life and death are all for the sake of Allah. Their attributes are reflected in the Quranic verse: "Indeed, my prayers, sacrifices, life and death are all for the sake of Allah, the Sustainer of the worlds". If you want to have a glimpse of them, just imagine how spirited they are - they are the ones who enter neither this world nor the Hereafter until they hear the tiding from their Lord: ' you indeed are my friend.' This is what is reflected in the following verse:

Besides this world, I have another world;
It is the world which is besides Hell and Heaven.

Allah is Holy; Allah is Holy! These are the people about whom whatever is said or written is like a drop in the unfathomable ocean (i.e. no words can describe them). You and I, and people like us have little to share from the benefactions of this group of people excepting that we keep reading and writing about them : what else can we do? *Ishque* is Nature's gift; it cannot be learnt.

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BENEFACTION 29

The Love of this World

O brother, you ought to understand that Paradise is such a creation that one cannot enter it while one is indulgent in this world. This being so, how can you get the Creator of Paradise while you are involved in this world? This is impossible, for there is a saying: "Abstaining from this world is the essence of all obedience". This world creates a barrier between man and the Creator; for this reason, it is considered to be a curse. The world and whatever is therein stand condemned. But make no mistake, let this be understood that the world we live in is not condemnable if one restricts it to meeting the essentials of life; if one has more of the world than his requirements, and if he spends it for benevolent purposes, this world is again not condemnable. Indeed, if one has the world in excess of what he needs and spends it for his personal pleasure and extravagant living or for saving, then it is condemnable.

O brother, Allah values the heart of the people, and not their external appearances. If one is outwardly involved in the world, he should try to keep his heart - which is what Allah values - free from the love of the world. The love of the world is like the dust which blinds the heart's eyes, and when this happens one loses his vision and he cannot see the happenings of the Hereafter. One hundred and twenty-four thousand Prophets came to this world, and they all said that the love of this world is the root cause of all evils. Note that it is the love of the world, not the

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possession of the world, which has been mentioned as the root cause of all evils. One should also note that the seat of love is the heart, not the hand. If one has in his possession the whole world, but his heart has no love for it, and he rather spends it in obedience, prayers, and for benevolent causes, then there is nothing to be afraid of. Have you not learnt about Prophet Sulaiman(AS) that he had all the world in his possession - all men, jinns, and devils were available to run errands for him -- yet he had no love of the world? Despite the fact that he was the king of such a great kingdom, he had no love for the world. Thus, while he had the world in his possession, yet he did not own it for himself: he would rather knit bags and sell them to buy two breads made of barley flour which he would share with the destitutes. On the other hand, if one has the love for the world, then, indeed, the world alone is what he cares for. The heart which is filled with the love of the world is doomed and ruined. If you and I do not like to own a ruined house, how can such a heart be worthy of Allah!

In some olden days, there lived a learned person who had memorized all the books contained in four hundred boxes. He was all the time busy in preaching and prayers, but his heart was filled with the love of the world. It was revealed to the Prophet of the time that he should go to that learned person and tell him that he might (if he so chose) indulge himself in his learning and prayers and in retaining in his memories the knowledge contained in the books kept in the four hundred boxes, but none of these things would be of any avail to him, because of his excessive indulgence in the world. His deeds were not

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acceptable; someone has rightly said:

If one has mastered enormous fund of knowledge,
but he is indulgent in the world, be sure that he has only earned Hell for himself;
As your heart has not given up the (love of the) world,
you will have no place to go but the blazing Hell.

O brother, we are faced with great difficulties; it is difficult to mention all the tribulations that we face all around. If some non-believer physician tells us not to eat certain things, we follow his instructions straightaway and refrain from the forbidden food. But there came one hundred and twenty-four thousand Prophets, all of whom said that the love of this world is the root cause of all evils, but we paid no heed to them. We trust a physician who may be a non-believer, but we do not trust the Prophets. Is it what we call *Iman*, and being a Muslims!

Give up the world, so that you are blessed with the *Deen*;
Leave this (world), so that you get that (*Deen*).

O brother, everybody, be he a Mumin or an infidel, a truthful believer or a hypocrite, agrees that this world is bad. It is the sanctuary of all troubles. Pharaohs and Namrood claimed godhood for themselves, only because of their indulgence in this world, and today all the evils that we find around are caused by this world. The stalwarts of the *Deen* have reckoned this world as the faeces of Man. Who would find pleasure and comfort with faeces! This suggests that one should live in this world just as one stays for some time in the toilet, and this too with abomination and

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unwillingly. What can be said about this world? In short, it is nothing but an evil. The troubles and tribulations of this world are so many that it my take volumes to write about them, and yet the story would remain unfinished.

O brother, despite these negatives about this world, there is one good point about it: it is the sowing ground for reaping in the Hereafter. You sow here today and reap in the Hereafter. For those who are blessed, this is an occasion for thanks-giving. O brother, you must be thankful. From various people who visited us from your place, we learnt about your good state. May Allah bless you with still more favours! The Prophet (SAW) has said: "How blessed are the possessions of a pious person!" Perhaps this has been said about you. The world which becomes the cultivating ground for the Hereafter is not the evil world according to this tradition of the Prophet (SAW).

O brother, cultivate as much as you can - using your hand, tongue, pen, paper, and money, -- for harvesting in the Hereafter. Be not concerned , if you can't save anything even for your coffin. This is said in this verse:

Give up the world so that you become the
monarch;
Otherwise you will keep tossing like a spinning wheel
Lose everything and relax;
It does not matter if you don't leave behind anything,
even for the coffin.

O brother, it should not be your only concern that you should indulge in prayers and fasting to the maximum

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possible extent. You should rather strive hard to get rid of the revolting self and the love of this world, for these are the greatest hurdles in this path.

The great men of *Tariquat* (spiritual way) are all agreed that the path that leads to Allah is neither in the heavens, nor the earth, nor in the west, nor the east, nor in *Arsh*, nor in *Kursi*, nor in *Lauh* (the board wherein are written Allah's commands), nor in *Qalam*. It rather is within one's own self. Quran says, "And (also) in yourselves. Can ye then not see?" (*Adh-Dhariyat*, verse 21). And in the words of the *Sufia*:.

You yourself are the embodiment of What you are seeking; It is with you; why should you be looking for it elsewhere.

Someone asked an elder of the Deen , "How many ways there are to get to Allah". He answered: "They number as many as there are particles in the universe. But the closest and the most useful way is to comfort other's heart - there is no better way. I got it this way, and I advise the same to my disciples. This is such a great thing that one would not find it even in optional prayers and fasting." In a gathering with an elder of the *Dæn*, someone said that the king of the country spends his night in prayers. The elder of the *Dæn* said that the king has forgotten his job and taken upon himself the responsibility of others. People asked: "O *Shaikh*, how was it? " The *Shaikh* said that, for him (the king), the way of spiritualism was that he should provide the hungry people with varieties of delicious dishes, provide varieties of clothings to those who have nothing to cover up, solace the grieved hearts, and fulfill the requirements of needy persons. He further said that keeping awake and

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spending the whole night offering prayers was the job of the saints, and that everybody ought to do his part of the job.

O brother, it is much better to work for the happiness of a broken heart and to rehabilitate a troubled heart than to keep awake offering prayers all the night. Don't you know that every broken thing is valueless except the broken heart. The more this (heart) is broken, the more valued it becomes. Once Musa (A.S) made supplication in these words: "O Allah, where shall I find You"? The answer came: "Seek Me near the broken heart". Musa (AS) said: "There is none as broken heart as I am." The answer came: "I am just there".

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Makhdoom-e-Jahan's (Rah A) Supplication to Allah:

> O Allah, You are my sustainer; You are powerful and I am helpless. O Allah, You are my Master, and I am Your servant.

O Allah, I am the most helpless amongst those who are helpless. O Allah, I am the most illiterate and ignorant amongst the illiterates and ignorants. O Allah, I do not know how to invoke Your favours. O Allah, You know my helplessness. O Allah, You know my needs. O Allah, I am helpless and have no means, nor any interceder: I disdain everything excepting You. O Allah, I, who is weak and miserable, frail and driven from pillar to post, a sinner and insensible, and a wrong-doer, a follower of Satan, a teacher of the school of sinners, insensible and bewildered, a hapless person who has been kicked out from every door, a sinner and an ill-doer, a lowly person doing no good deeds, one who does not keep promise and is an opportunist, a hypocrite, an imposter dervish, an ill-doer and a sinner, a wretched pretender of Islam, beseech You that, in Your infinite Blessing and Affection, You may please free me from the captivity of *Nafs-e-Ammara* (lowly self) and bless me with the urge to seek Your Forgiveness in all earnestness, for I dread to think of being produced before You for justice. O Allah, bless me with the guidance to worship You, for without Your guidance, it is impossible to worship You. O Allah, bless me with *Ma'arafat*, for without *Ma'arafat* one cannot have knowledge about You.

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O Allah, I spent my whole life in a way which was against Your will, and I knew not: I seek your Forgiveness, and I disdain them all.

O You who heals the broken heart, O You who provides relief to the downtrodden, O You who listens to those who call You in difficulties, O You who provides succour to the hapless, O You who forgives the repenting sinners, O You whose benevolence made me a hardened sinner, O You whose kindness made me careless and daring, please forgive my impertinence and carelessness, and adore me in the robe of *Ma'arafat*. O Allah, in the name of the prayers of the angels, in the name of piety of the worshippers and God-fearing people; O Allah, in the name of Your chosen people; O Allah, in the name of those who stand in attendance to Your throne; O Allah, in the name of Your martyrs; O Allah, in the name of the tears flowing out of repentant sinners; O Allah, in the name of those sinners who sought Your Forgiveness; O Allah, in the name of Your Majesty and Grandeur; O Allah, in the name of Your Greatness and Perfection, kindly fulfill the needs and requirements of myself and all Muslims, and strengthen our *Iman* (belief in Islam) in this world and the Hereafter.

O Allah, when I am laid to rest in the small and dark cubicle of my grave, let my *Iman* serve as the shining light in the grave. There is no god except Allah (SWT). There is none to be worshipped except Allah. There is no one as dearest as Allah. There is none to be sought for except Allah. There is none to be cherished as Allah. There is none really present except Allah. There is none to be worshipped

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except Allah, and Mohammad (SAW) is His Prophet. I testify that Mohammad (SAW) is His servant and prophet. O Allah, the most Gracious and Merciful, kindly shower Your Blessings on the best of the creation, i.e. on ProphetMohammad (SAW) and his progenies and companions.

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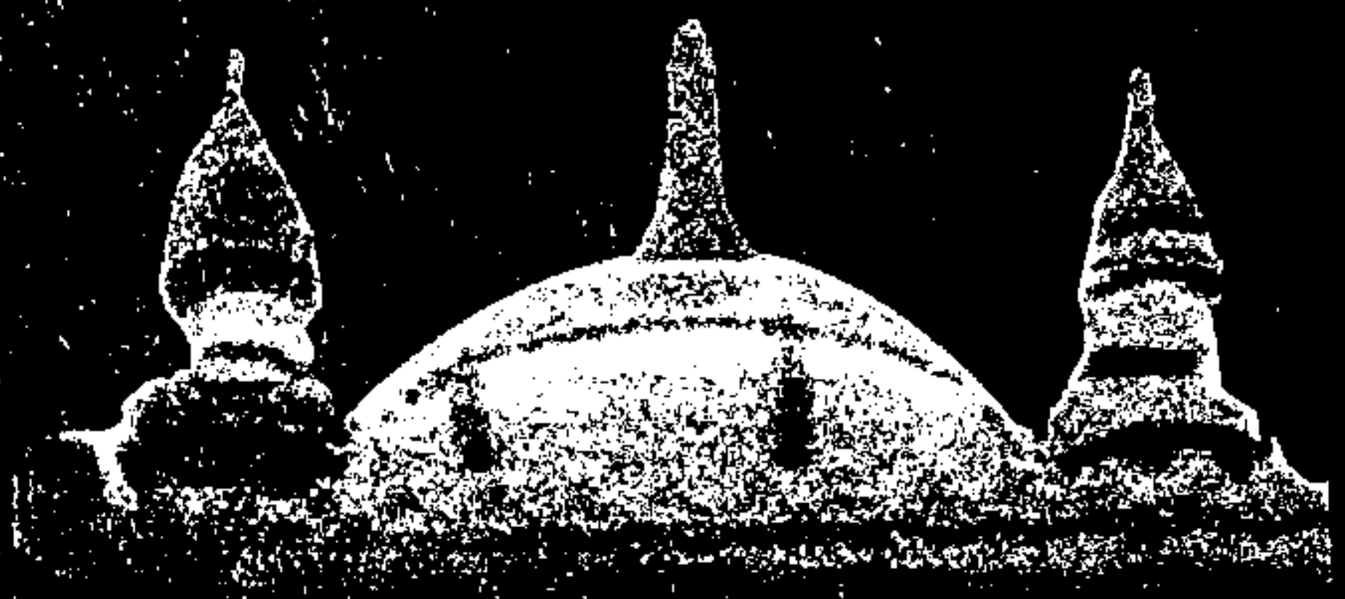
FAWAID-E-RUKNI

(A Compendium of Benefactions)

by

Sufi Saint

Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin
Ahmad Yahya Maneri (RahA)



اَشْفَقُ الْاَخَوَانِ
عَلَيْكَ دِيْنُكَ

Your Deen Is More Affectionate Than Your Brother

بھائیوں سے بھی زیادہ تجھ پر شفقت کرنے والا تیرا دین ہے

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